KOKOU NO HITO

by Authors: NABEDA Yoshiro and NITTA Jiro
by Artist: SAKAMOTO Shinichi

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Kokou no Hito ch 163

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孤高の人

THE CLIMBER

Ⅱ

殉教者

坂本眞一

原作 新田次郎著「孤高の人」

YJ
ヤングジャンプ
YJC

孤高の人 Ⅱ

坂本眞一

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俺は下りる

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生きて家族のもとへ帰るんだ——。

K2東壁に単独で挑んだ文太郎は、遂に人類未踏の領域に到達。しかし悪天候が襲した…。文太郎は撤退を決意。だが生還を焦ったことで、"死の領域"で重大なミスを犯してしまう。極限の雪山で文太郎が迎えた運命とは!?　現代に生きる「加藤文太郎」の生き様を描いた山岳ロマン、遂に完結!!

孤高の人

THE CLIMBER

17

坂本眞一

原作：新田次郎著「孤高の人」

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殉教者

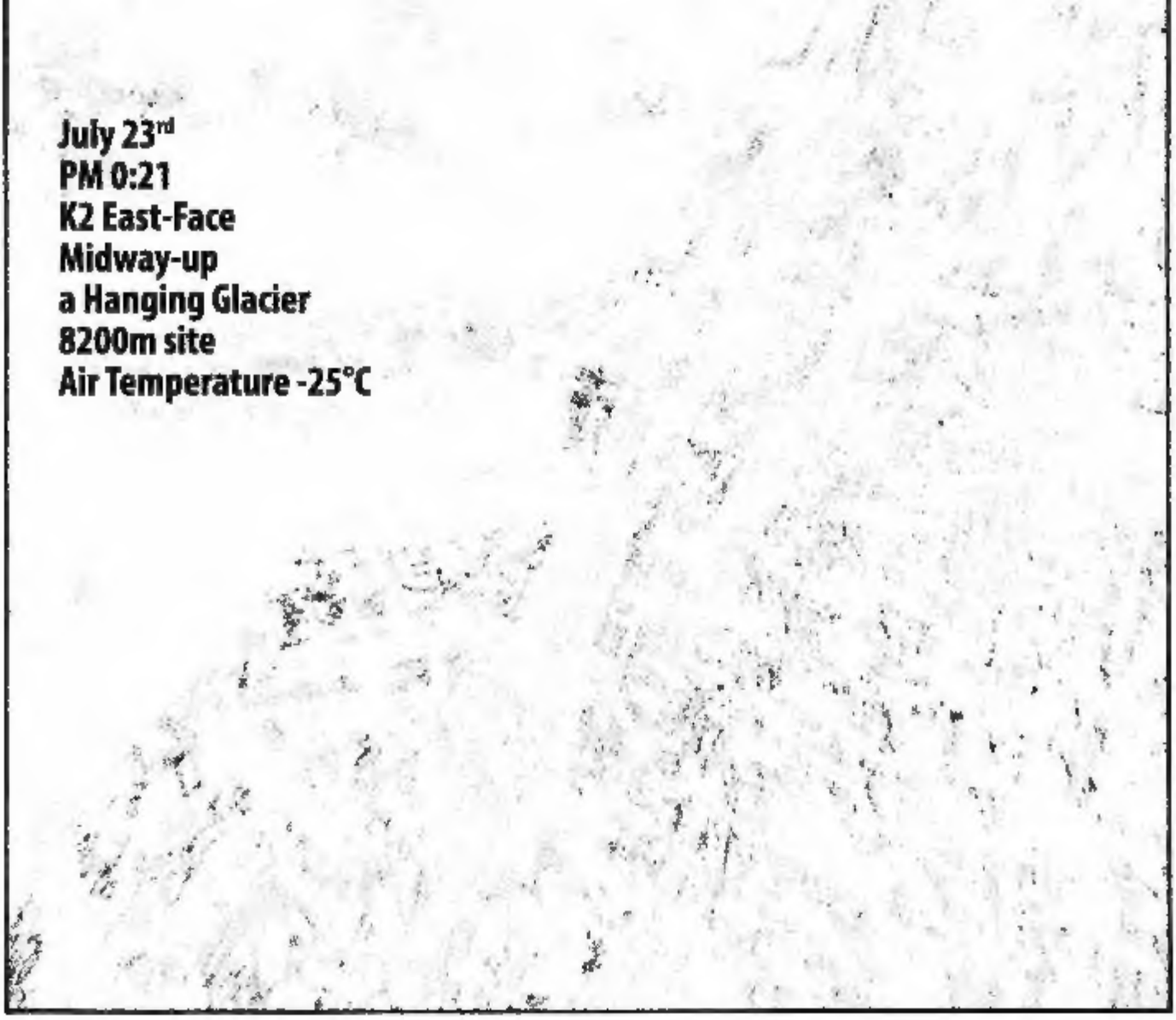
17

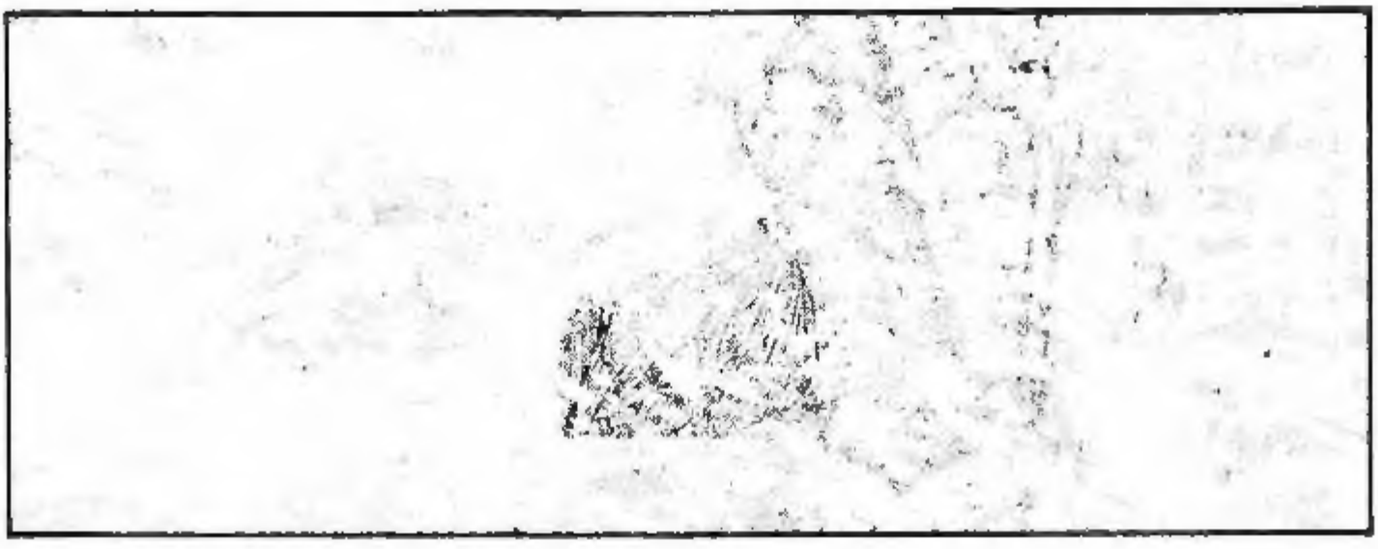
THE CLIMBER

This is a work of fiction. There are no connections to any actual people, groups, or events.

Why was that person drawn to mountains?

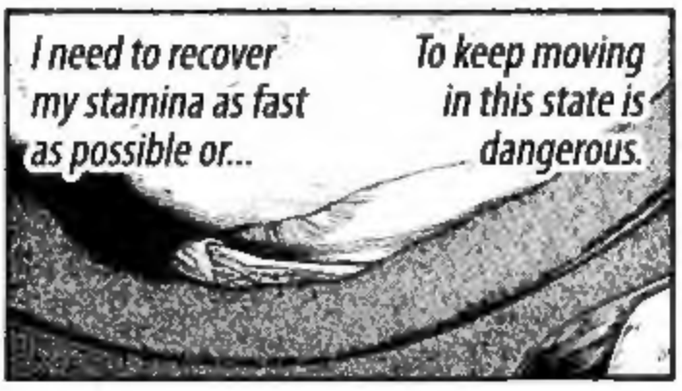
Chapter 163 - *CLIMB* - Remorse

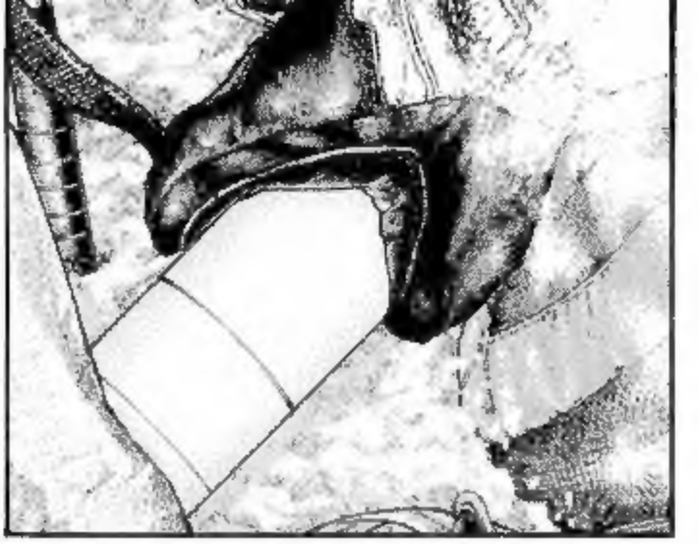

July 23rd
PM 0:21
K2 East-Face
Midway-up
a Hanging Glacier
8200m site
Air Temperature -25°C

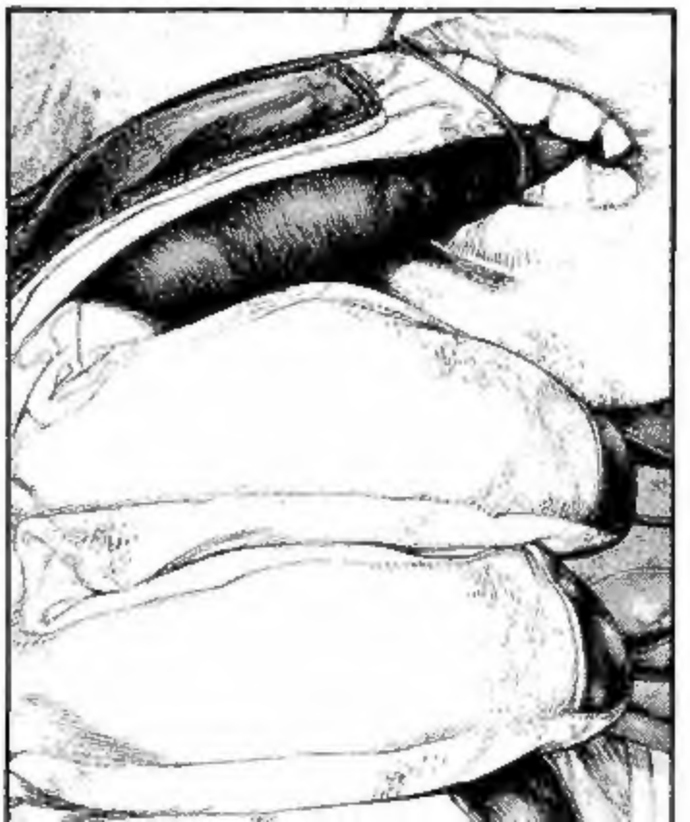


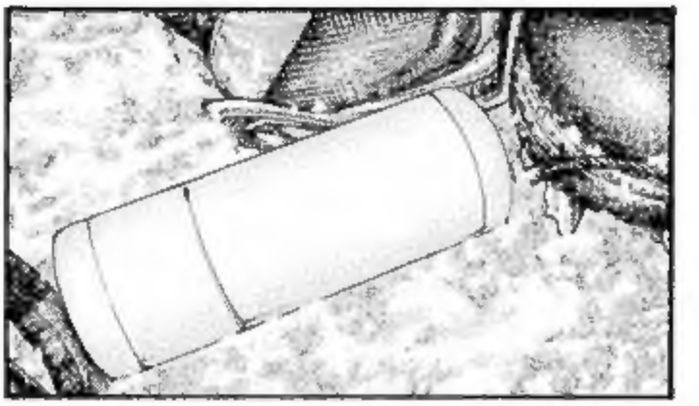
My decision may be too late.

That may be a symptom of hypothermia...
My hands are shaking...


I need to recover my stamina as fast as possible or...
To keep moving in this state is dangerous.







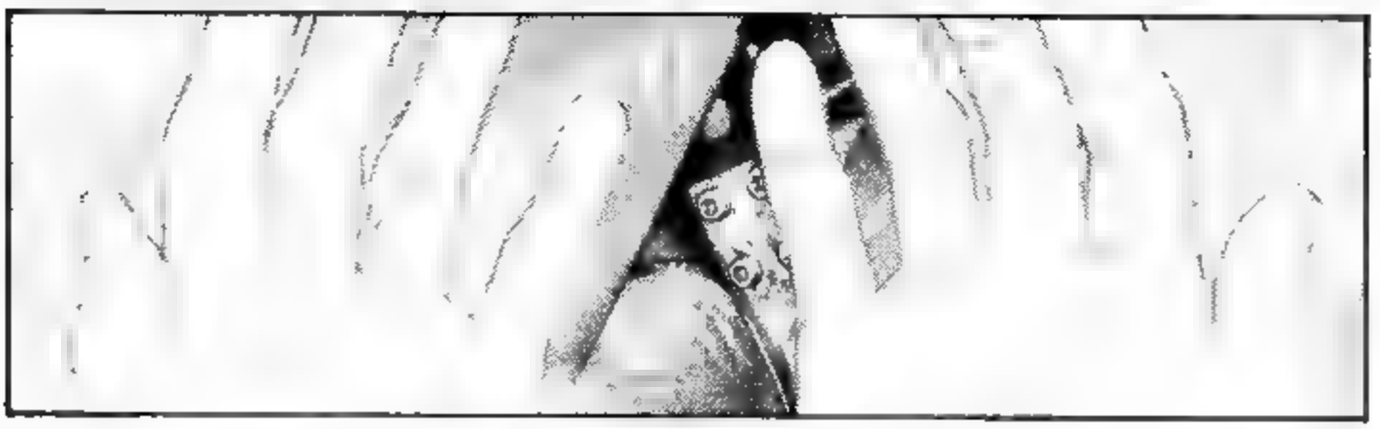
White...

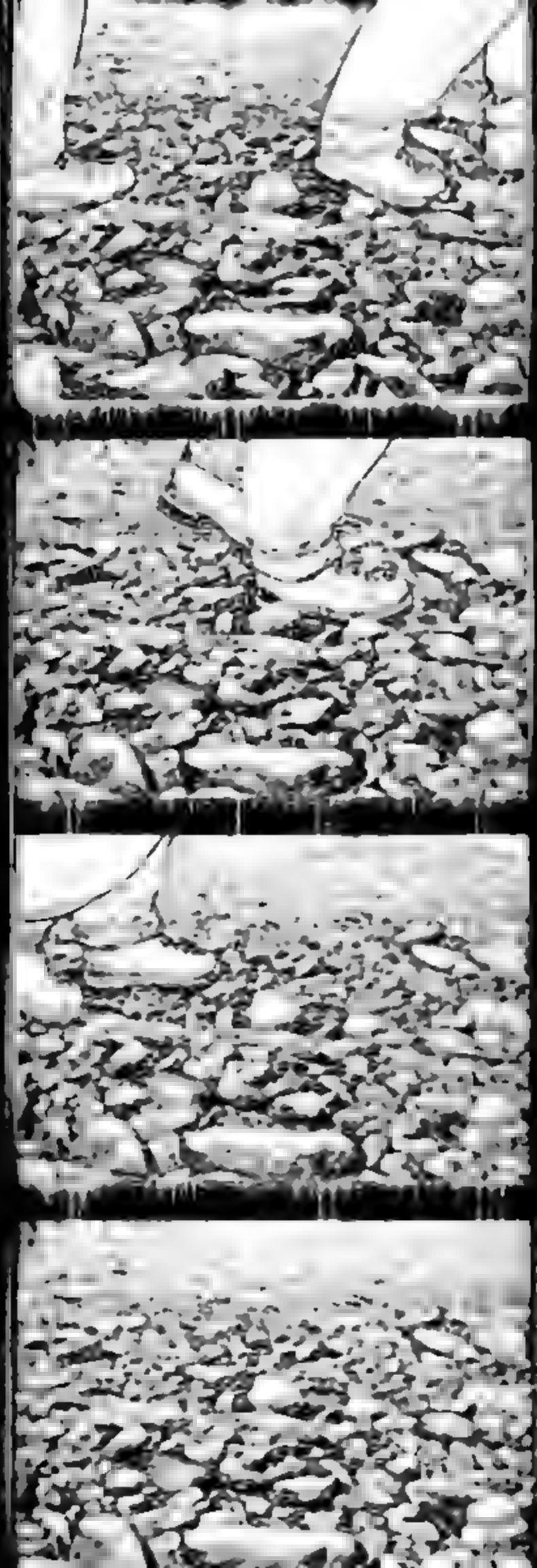
Could it be...

When he climbed to a summit at the young age of 28 years old, he was exhausted of energy which transfigured his appearance to that of an old man in one night.

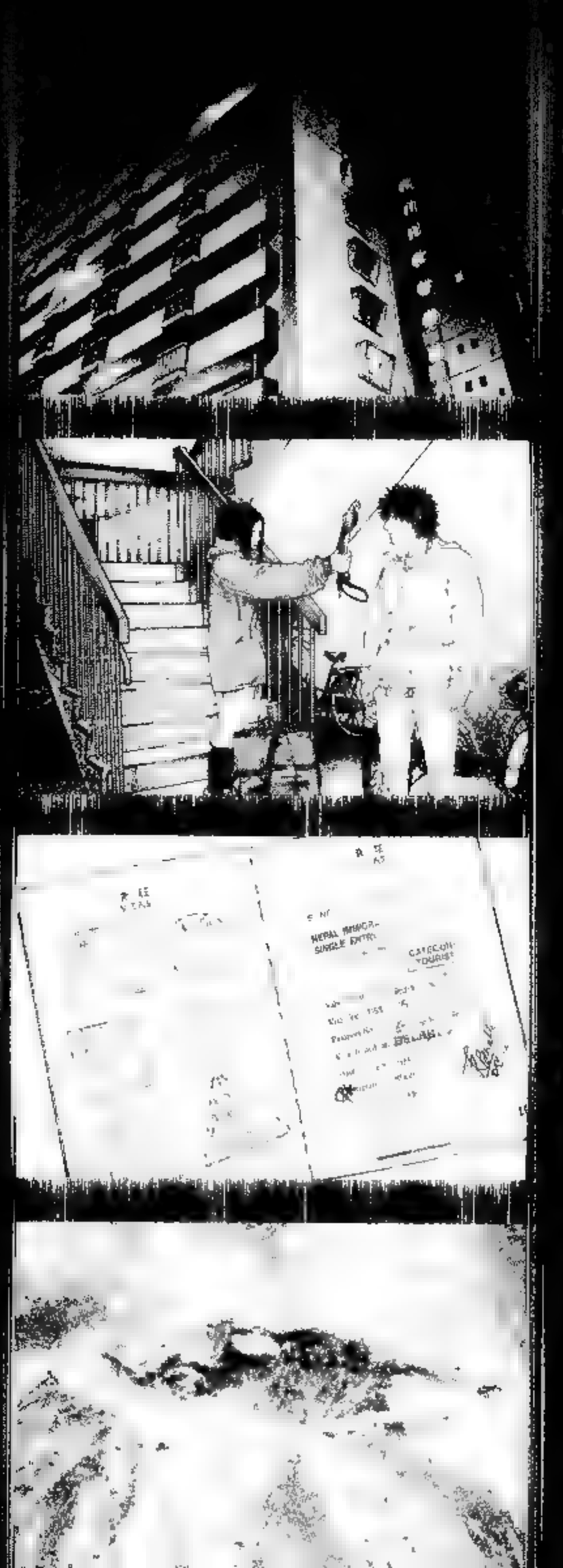
1953
Nanga Parbat
Herman Buhl

※ NANGA PARBAT IS A 8125 METER HIMALAYAN PEAK. HERMAN BUHL WAS THE FIRST CLIMBER TO SUMMIT THAT MOUNTAIN. DOING SO SOLO AND WITHOUT BOTTLED OXYGEN.





I wouldn't have come to K2...
Back then, if I'd turned down the job offer from Adachi-sensei...

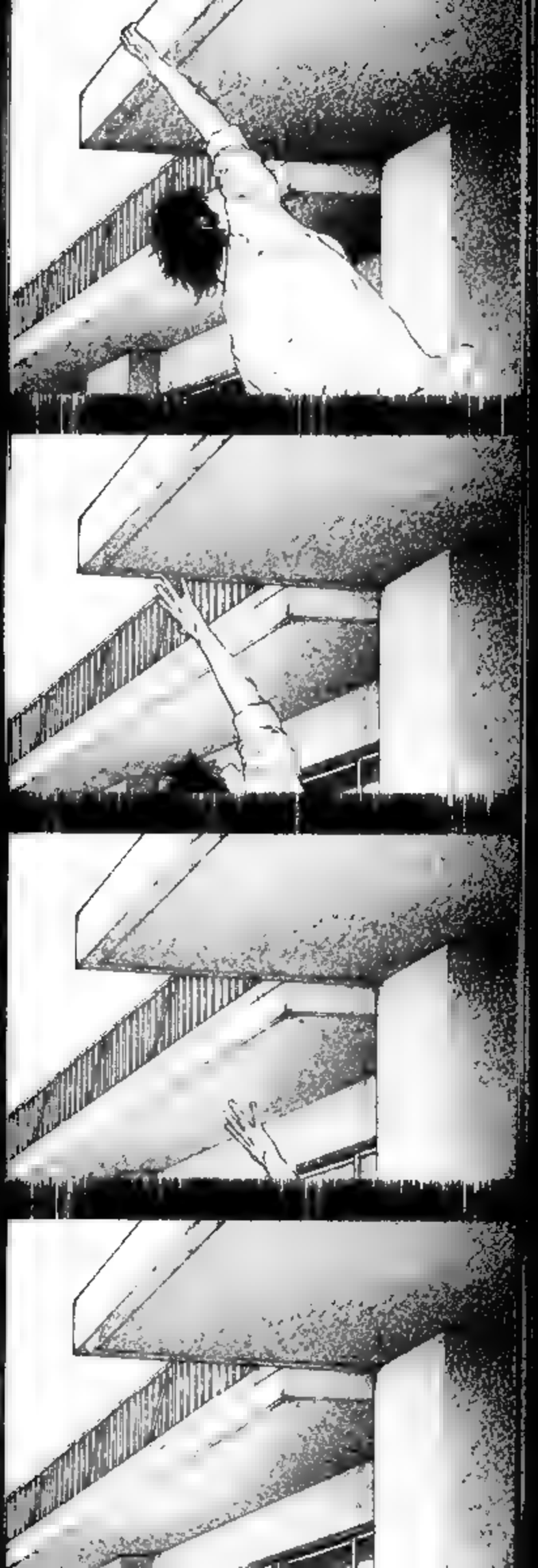


I shouldn't have accepted that ice axe from Takemura that night...

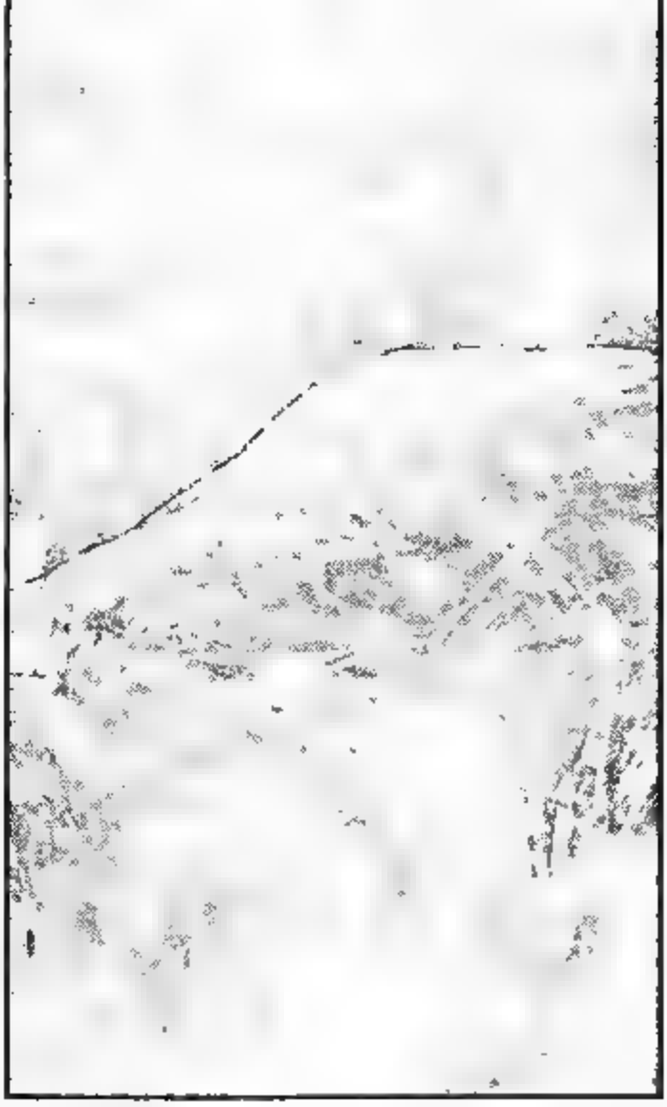
I shouldn't have even climbed all those 8000 meter peaks...

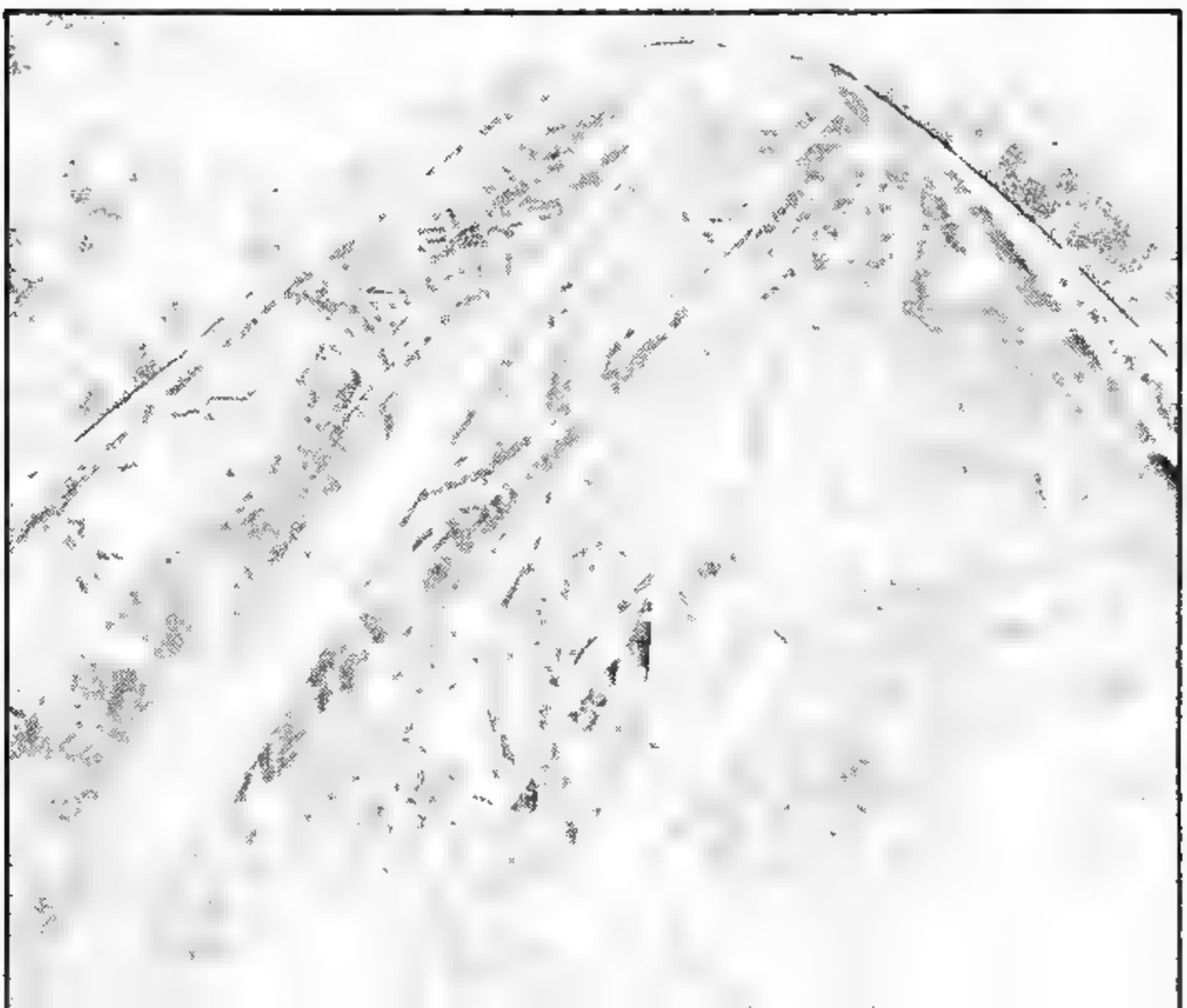
I shouldn't have gone to that weather measurement station on Mount Fuji...

14 Mountain?
Why did I join something like...
No, I wish I hadn't gone along with Kurosawa-san.
No.
No.
...accepted Oonishi-sensei's invitation in the first place!!!
I wish I hadn't...


No, that's not it.

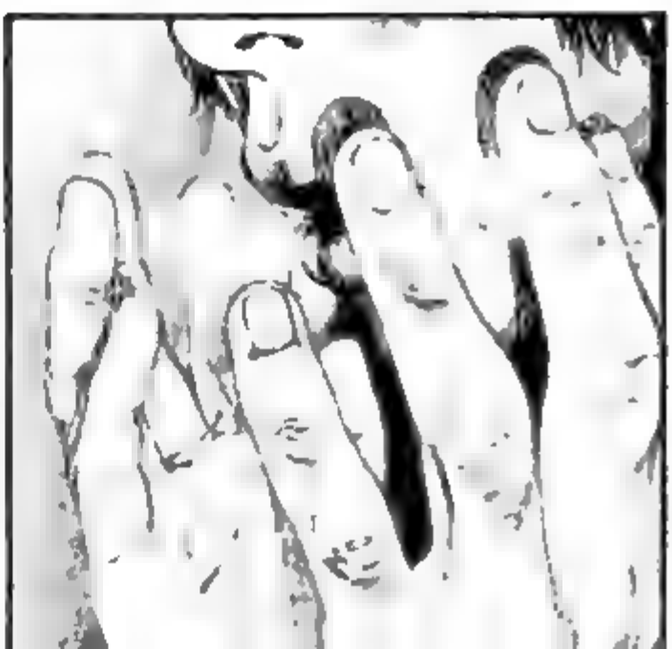
I would have been better off if I'd fallen back then...

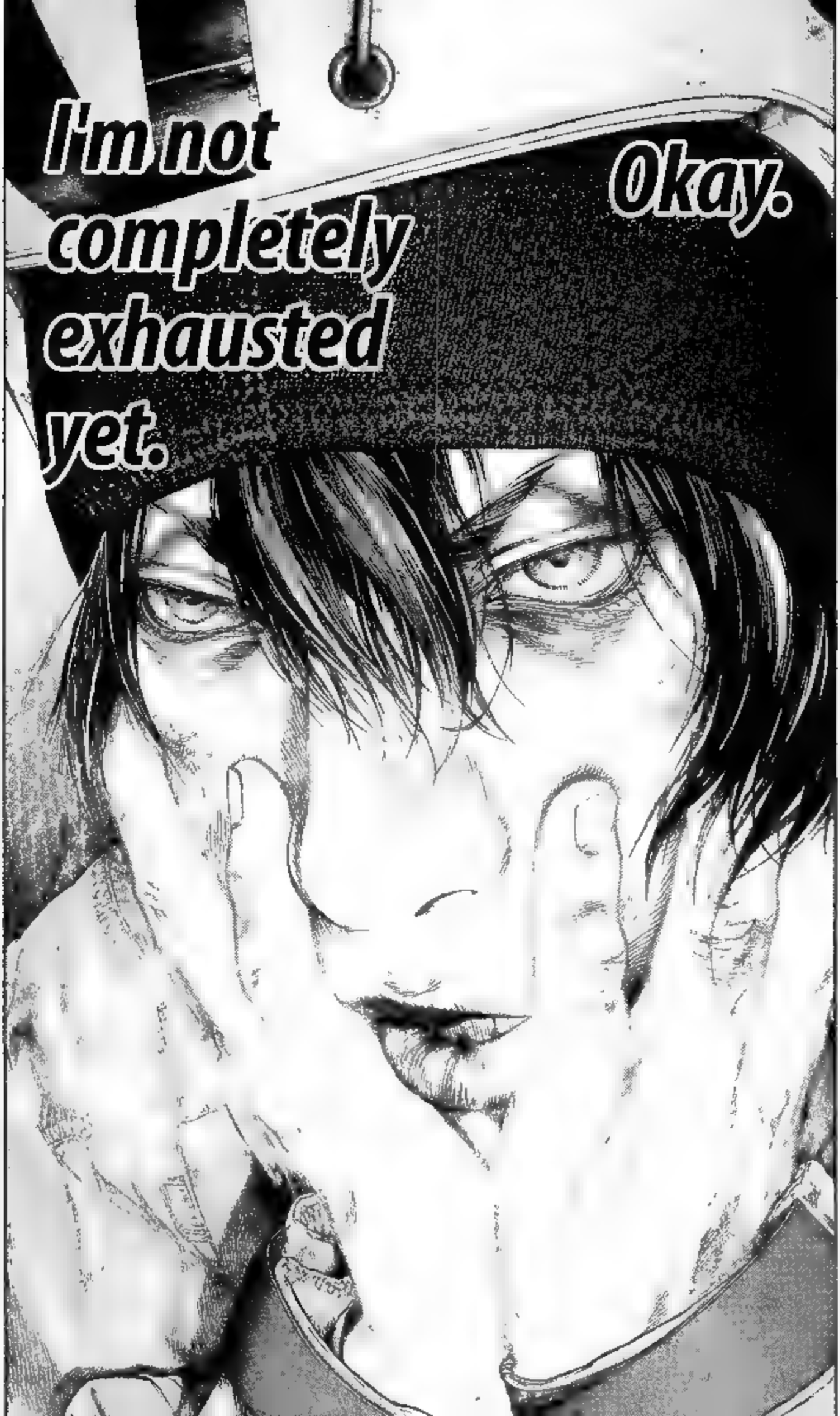


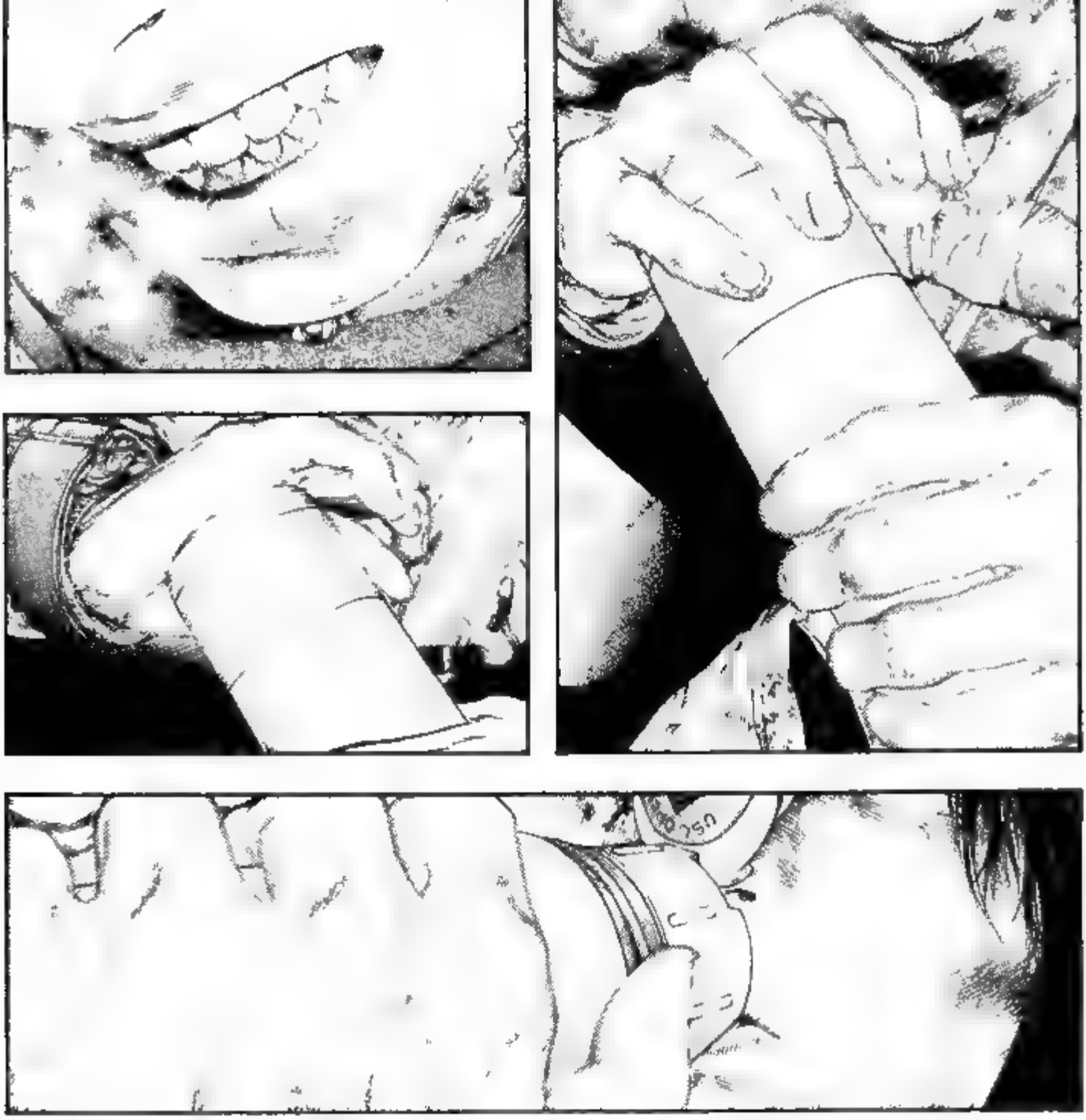


That's not true.
No.

that I was
able to meet
Hana-chan
and Rokka...
It is
because
of the life
I chose




I'm not completely exhausted yet.
Okay.


It's okay.
My choices
are always
right.
I definitely
won't die.

I'll descend.

And return home to my family alive ——

*T/N: STARTING HERE THERE'S A THING THE AUTHOR DOES WITH THE TEXT TO INDICATE THE STATE OF BUNTAROU'S MIND. OCCASIONALLY TEXT IS WRITTEN MIRRORED. IT'S MORE APPARENT IN JAPANESE WHERE THE TEXT IS LARGELY ASYMMETRICAL.

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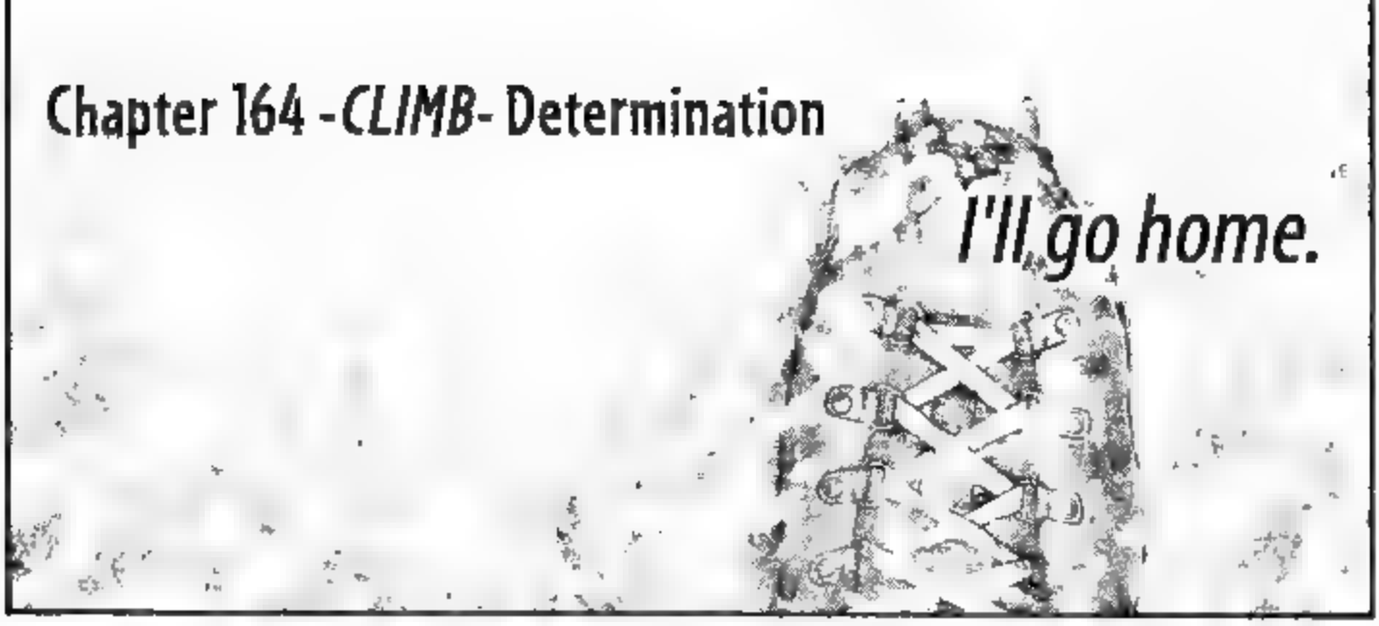
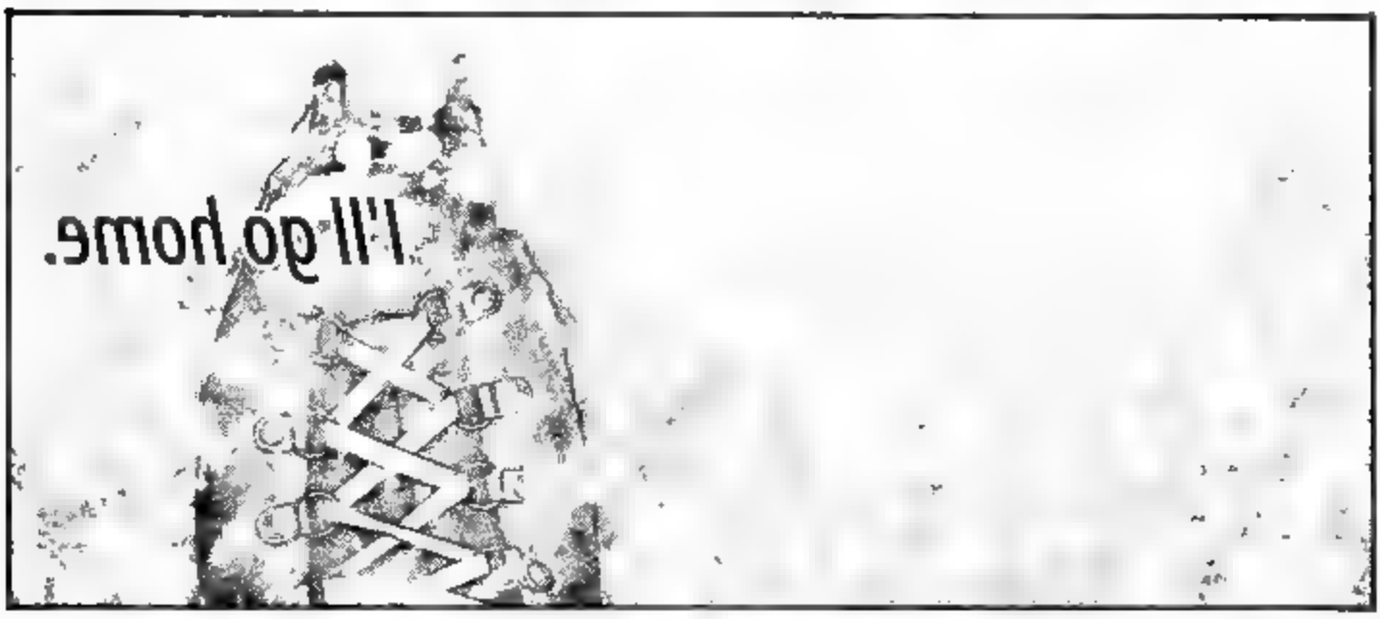
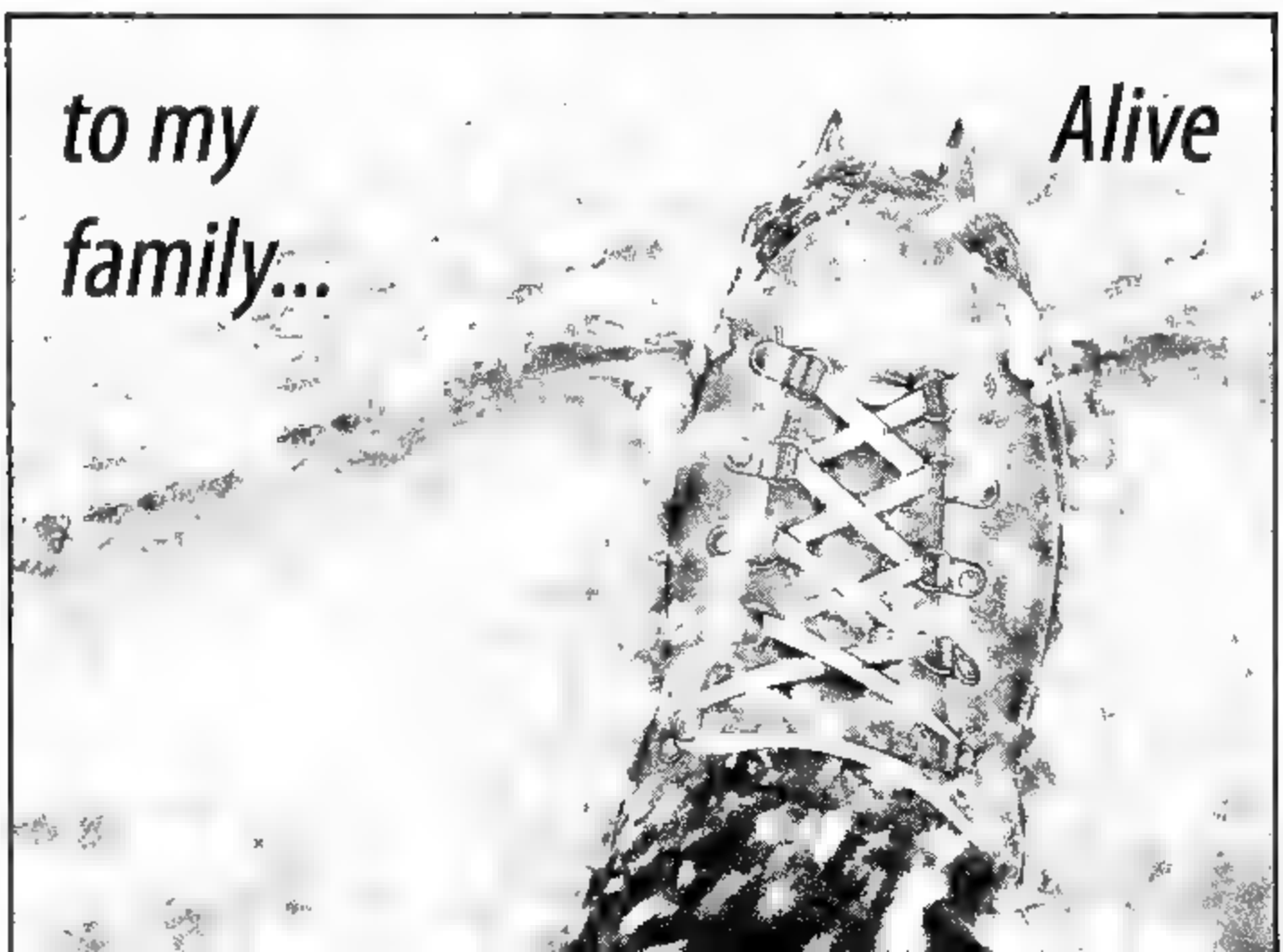
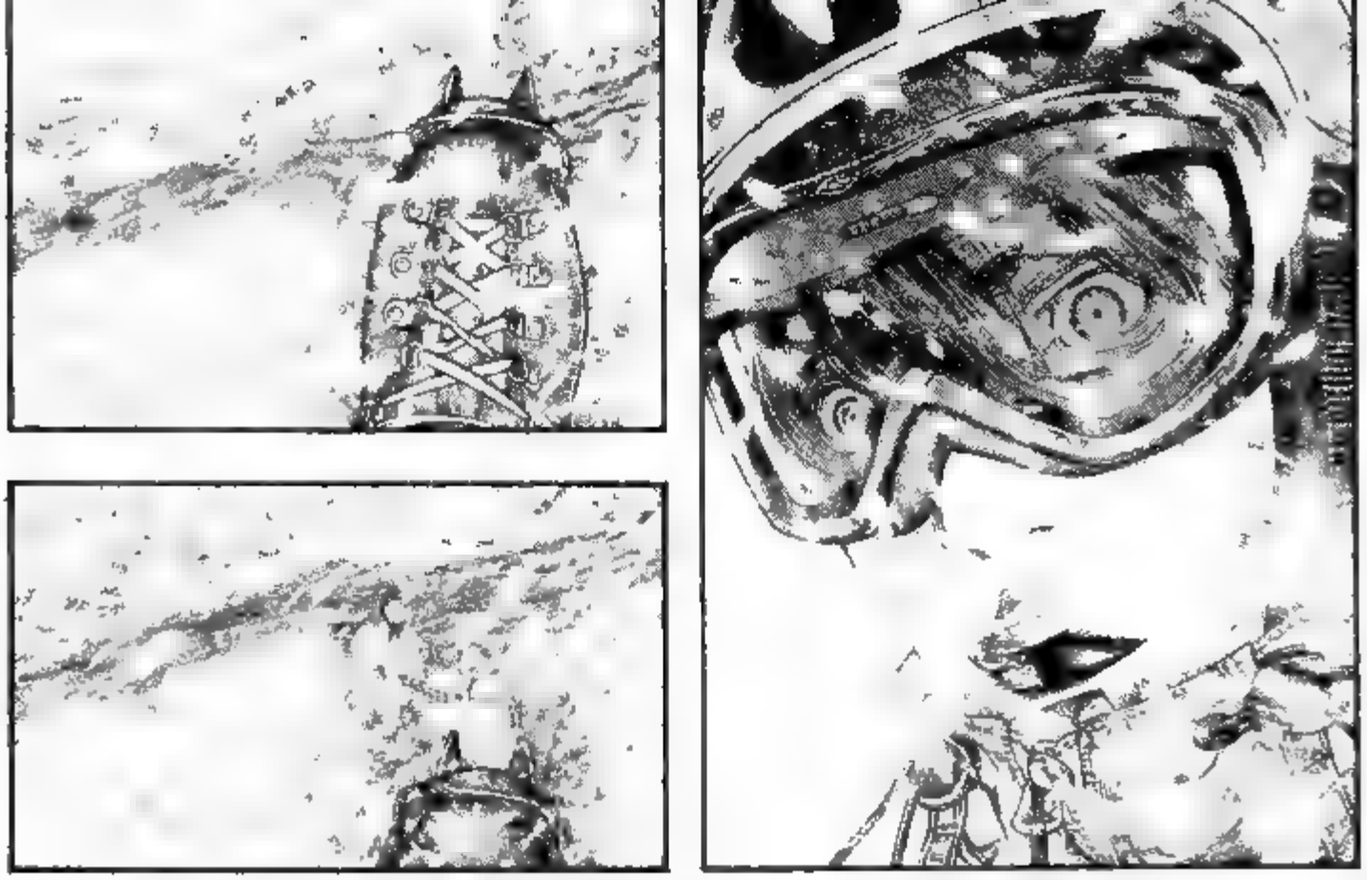

I'll go home.


I'll go home.


to my family...
Alive

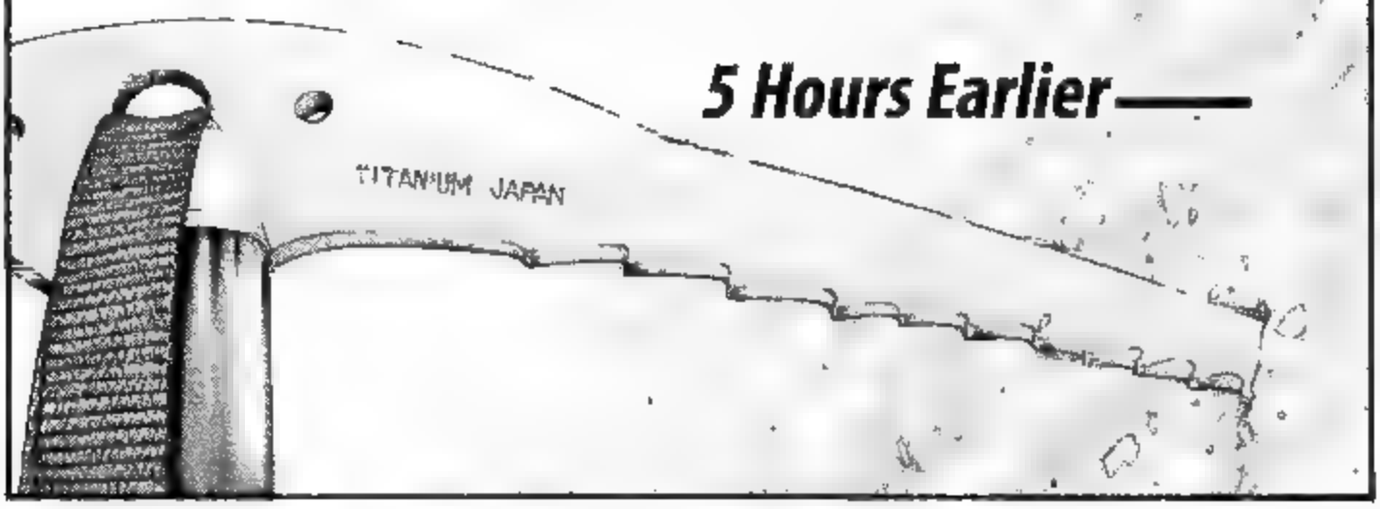
July 23rd
12:50 PM
K2 East Face
Terace Mid-way up a
Hanging Glacier 8200m
Air Temperature -25°C

Chapter 164 - *CLIMB*- Determination

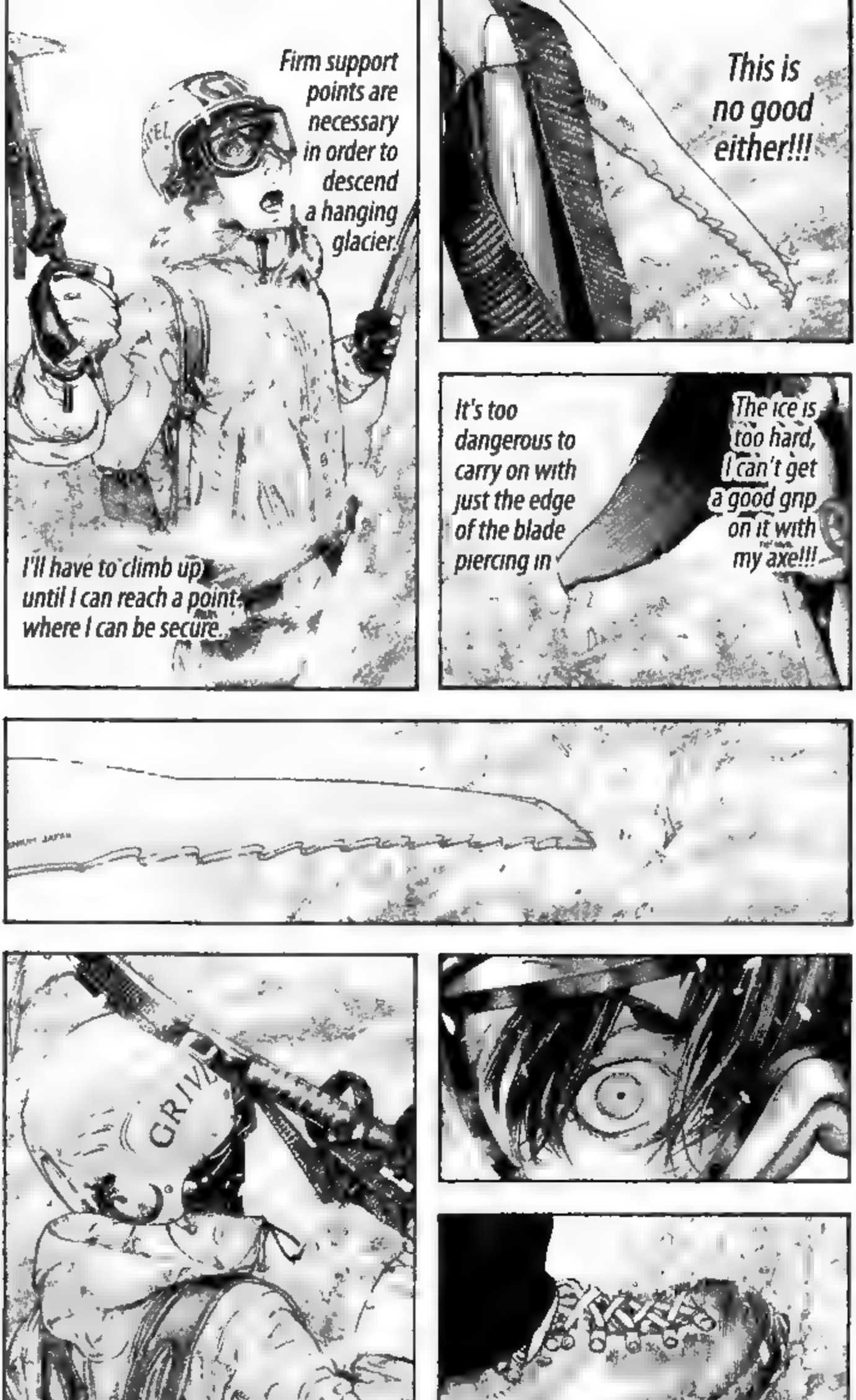


One more step and I would've fallen 1000 meters straight down.
What am I doing? I wasn't even self-belayed.

Didn't you climb this far in order to make it home alive...?
Pull yourself together!!!



July 23rd
7:20 AM
K2 East Face
Mid-way up
a Hanging Glacier
8150m
Air Temperature -27°C


Firm support points are necessary in order to descend a hanging glacier.
I'll have to climb up until I can reach a point where I can be secure.
This is no good either!!!
It's too dangerous to carry on with just the edge of the blade piercing in
The ice is too hard, I can't get a good grip on it with my axe!!!
GRIVEL

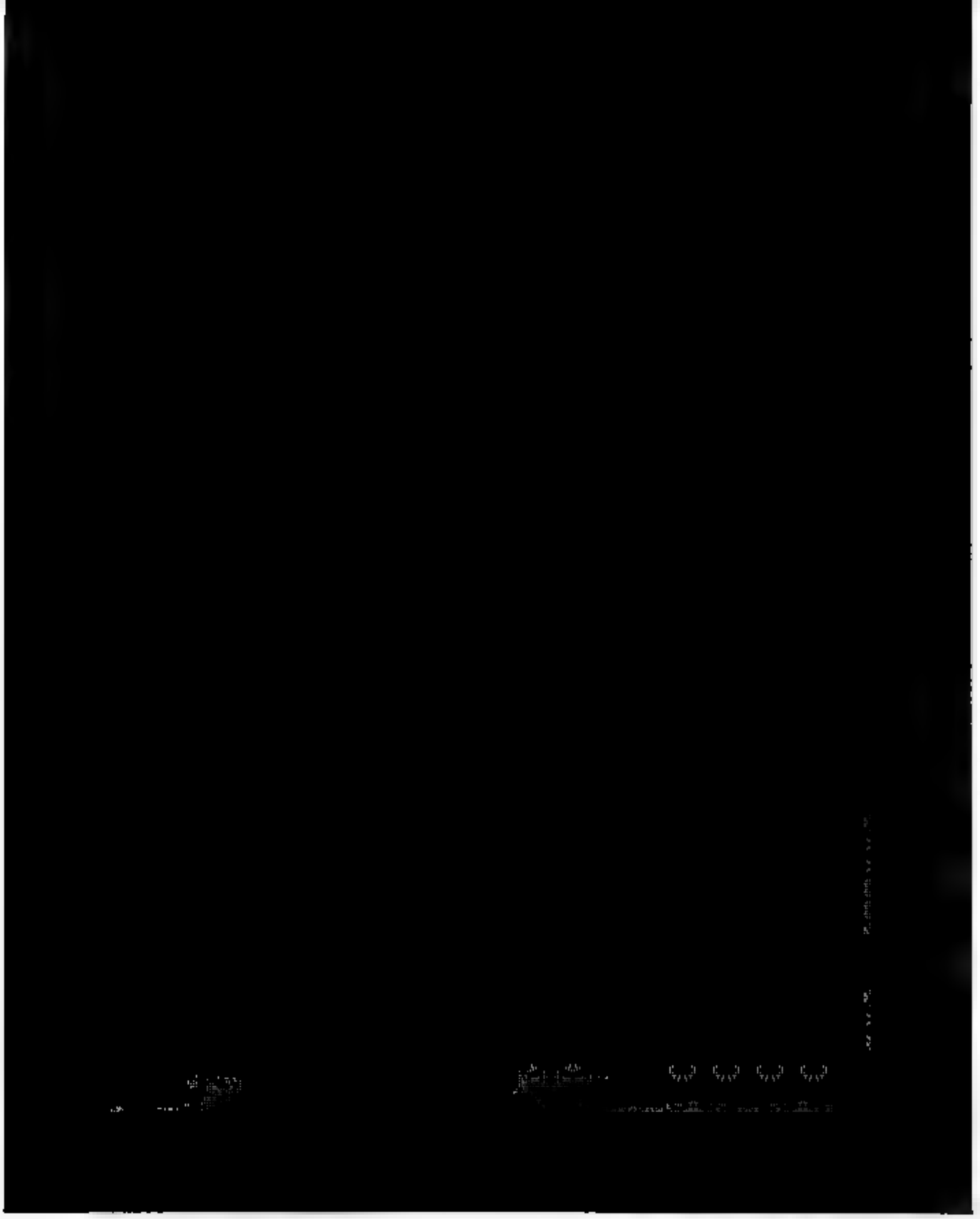
MIZŌ
Not yet, Rokka!!!

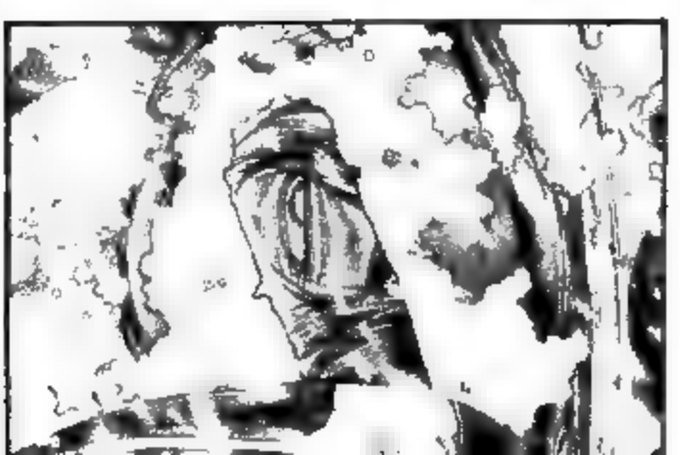
One more time...

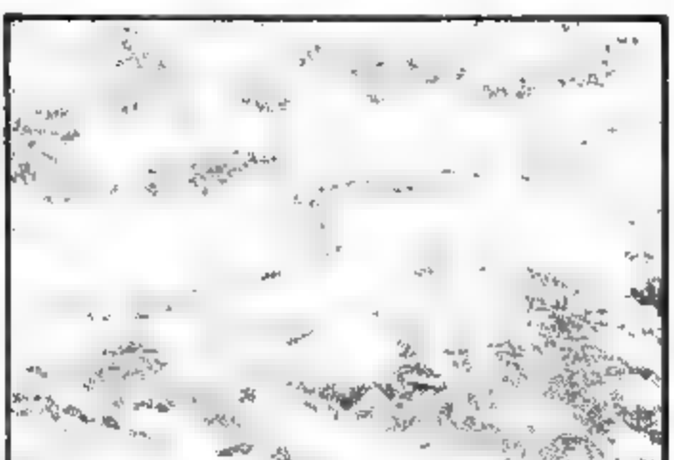
I want to hug Rokka one more time.

Because I've decided I'm not making it to the top

I'm sure I can make it back alive...



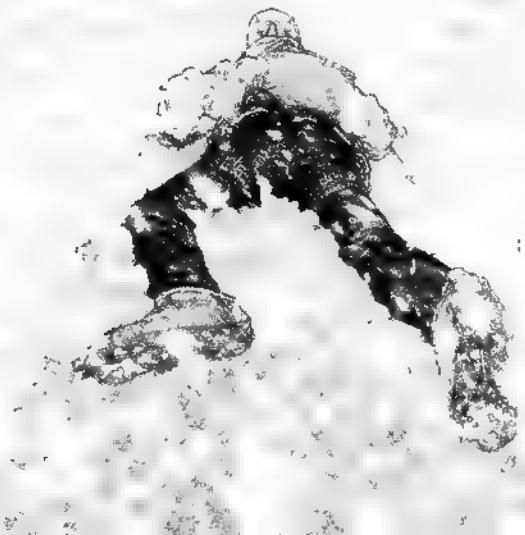




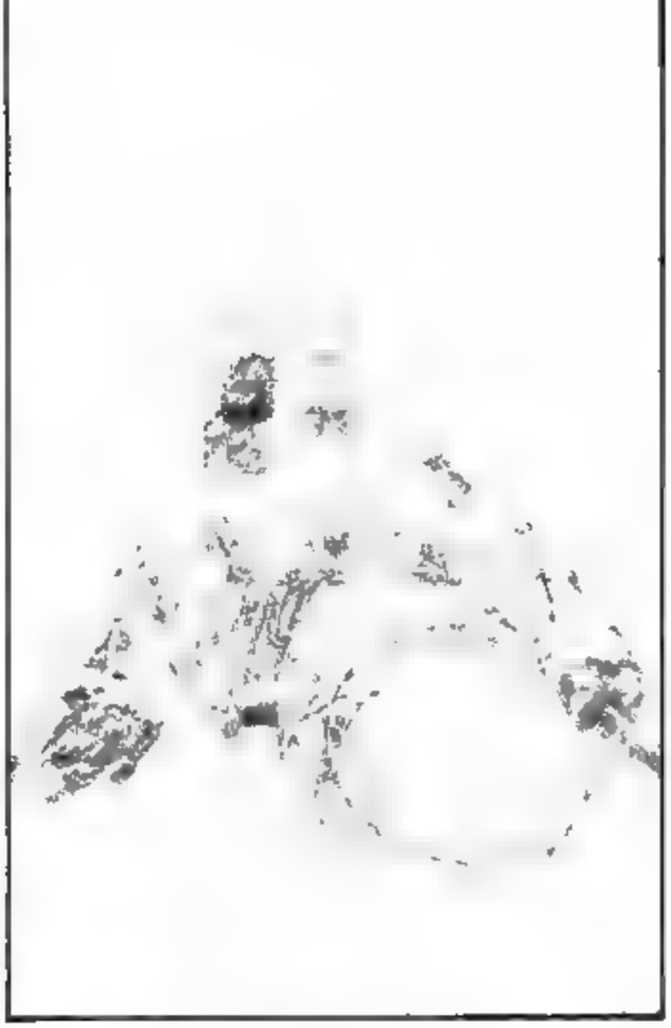
This can't be...

My body...

won't move...

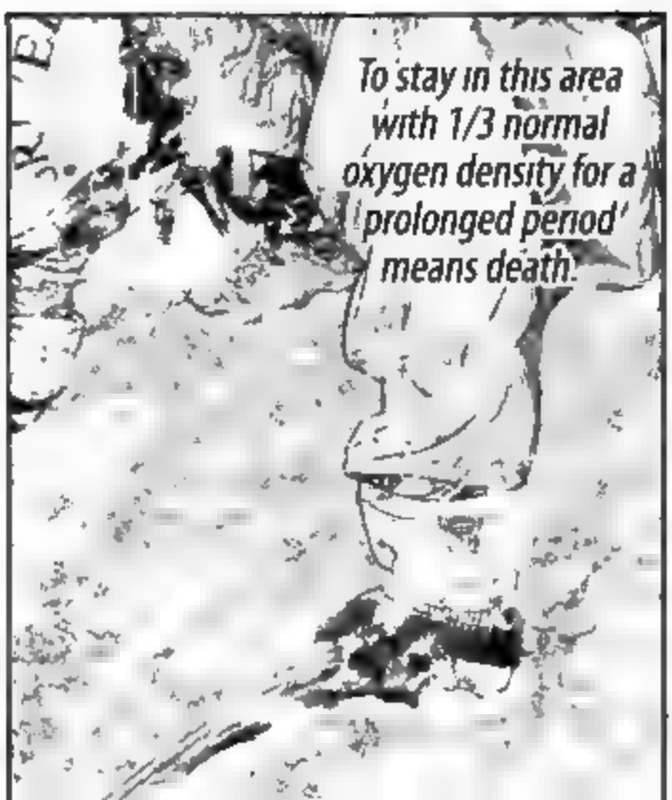


Don't tell me I blacked out...?!
The weather has changed...?!!

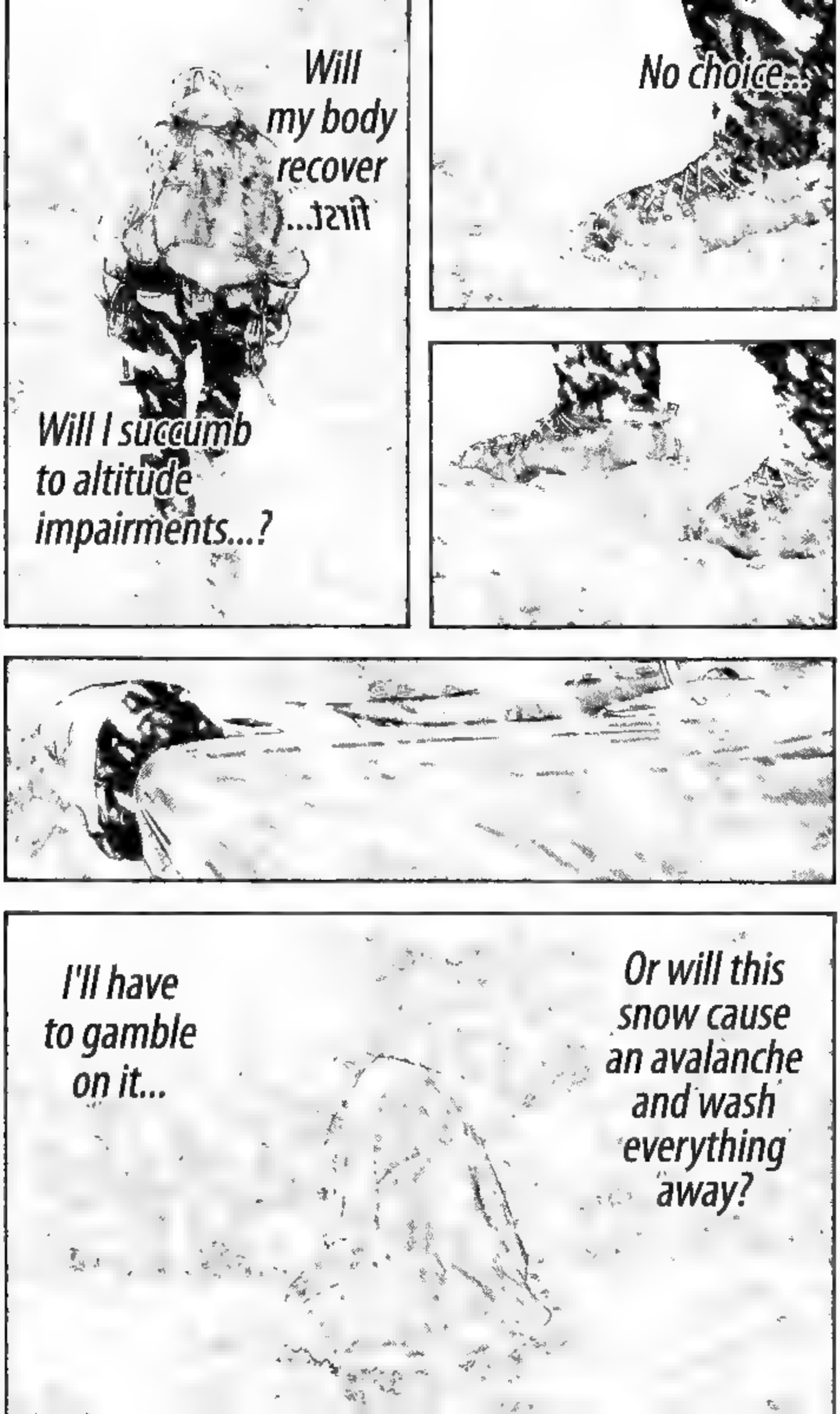


Damn. Just how long was I...
7:45

I have to gain a support point and descend as fast as possible or...!!!
It's 15 minutes since I last looked at my watch, but it should be under 5.


To stay in this area with 1/3 normal oxygen density for a prolonged period means death.

Dammit. I really can't move...


No choice...
Will my body recover first...
Will I succumb to altitude impairments...?
I'll have to gamble on it...
Or will this snow cause an avalanche and wash everything away?

July 23rd
1:06 PM

And 5 hours later, present.

Nor have there been any altitude impairments. And my stamina is completely back.

An avalanche hasn't happened yet.

It's okay now.

I won't think of anything, and just walk with a clear head.

I won't make the mistake of thinking about Rokka and letting my pace fall apart again.

I won my gamble ——...

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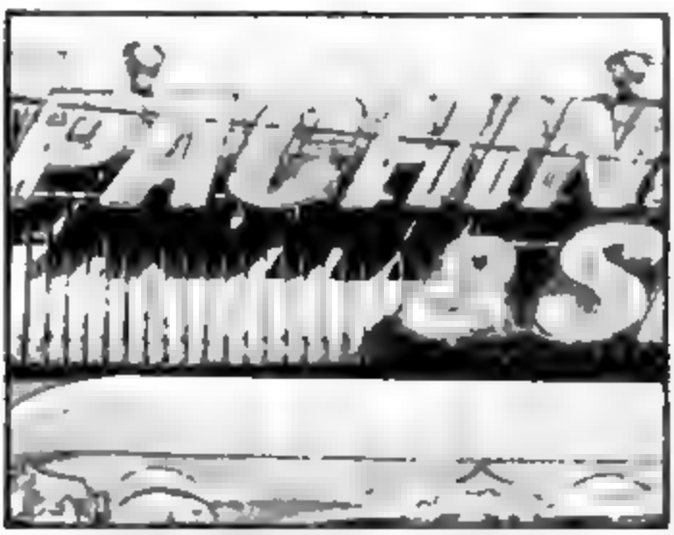
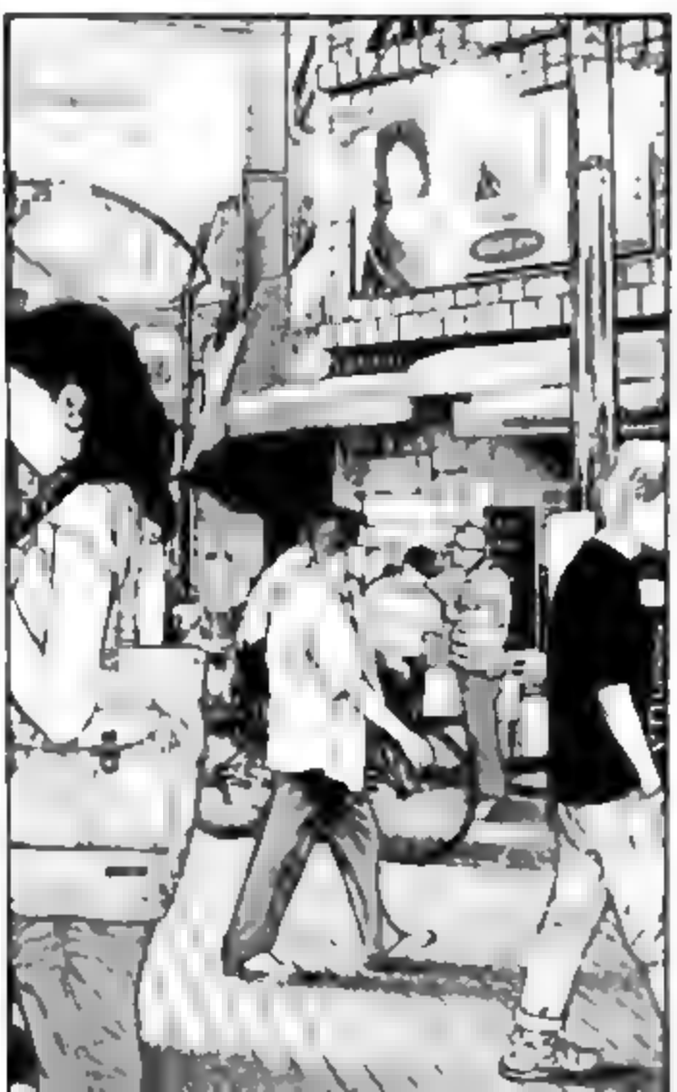
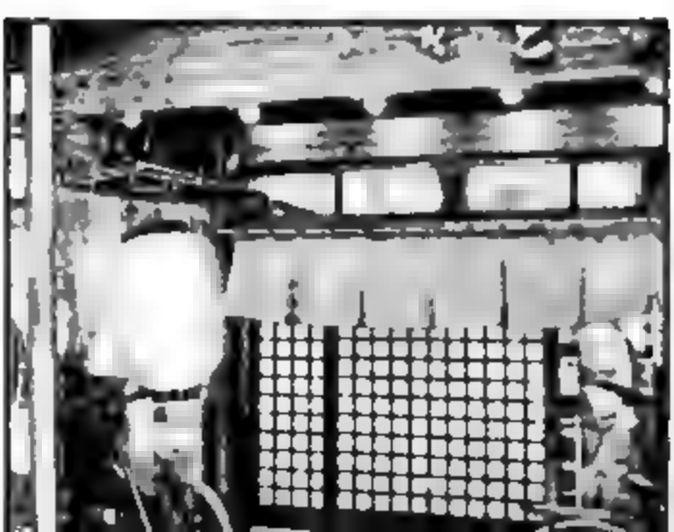
Chapter-165 -CLIMB- Annulment
防犯カメラ作動中

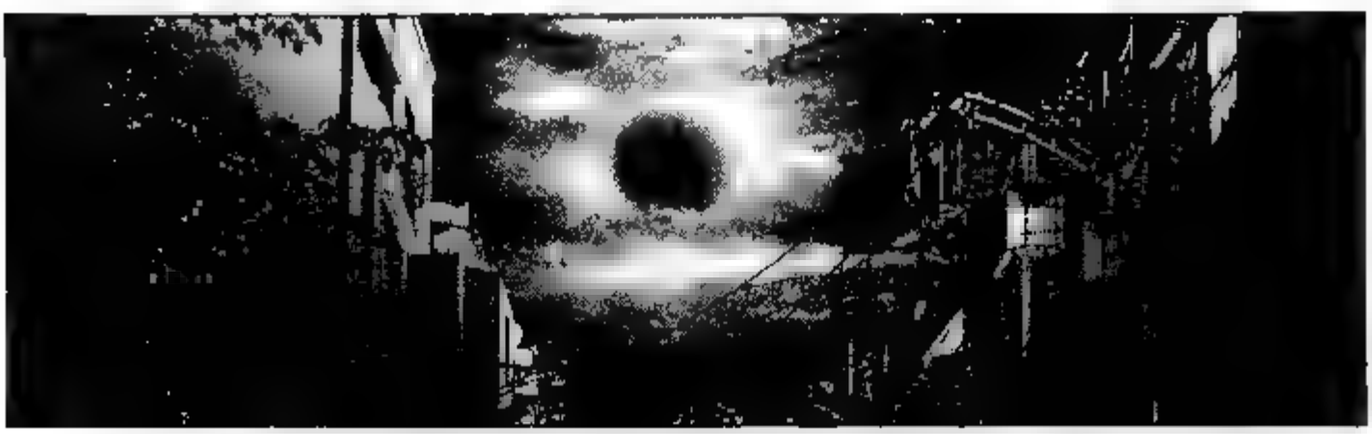

FACILITIES

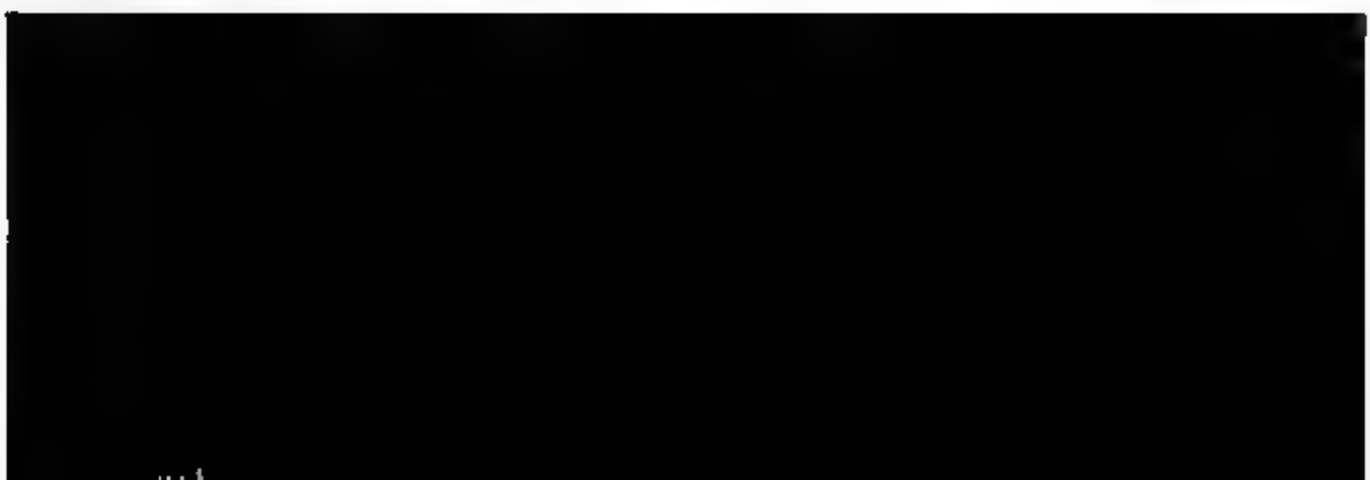


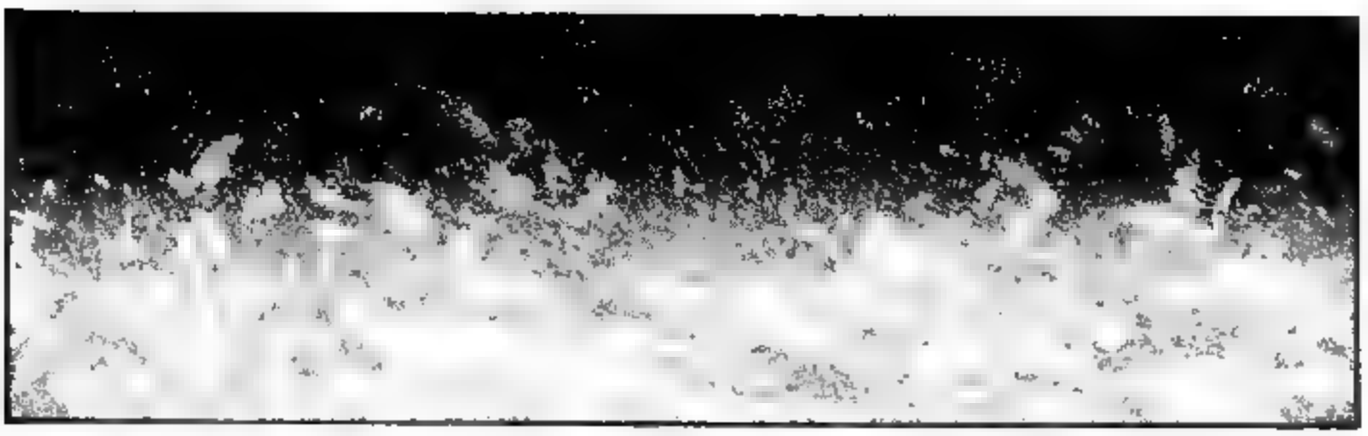


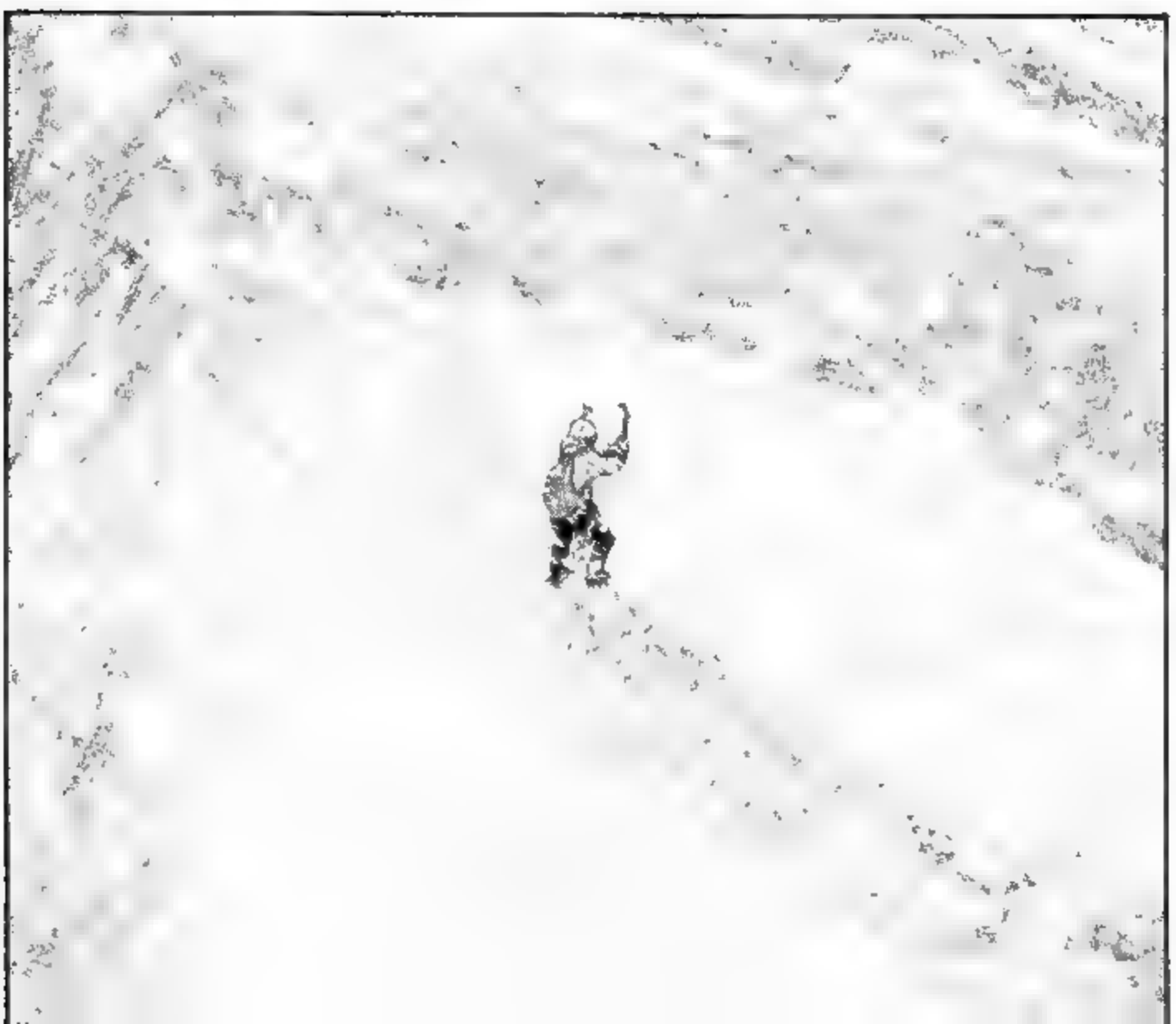
Chapter 165 -CLIMB- Annulment
本売出し
正和

酒屋

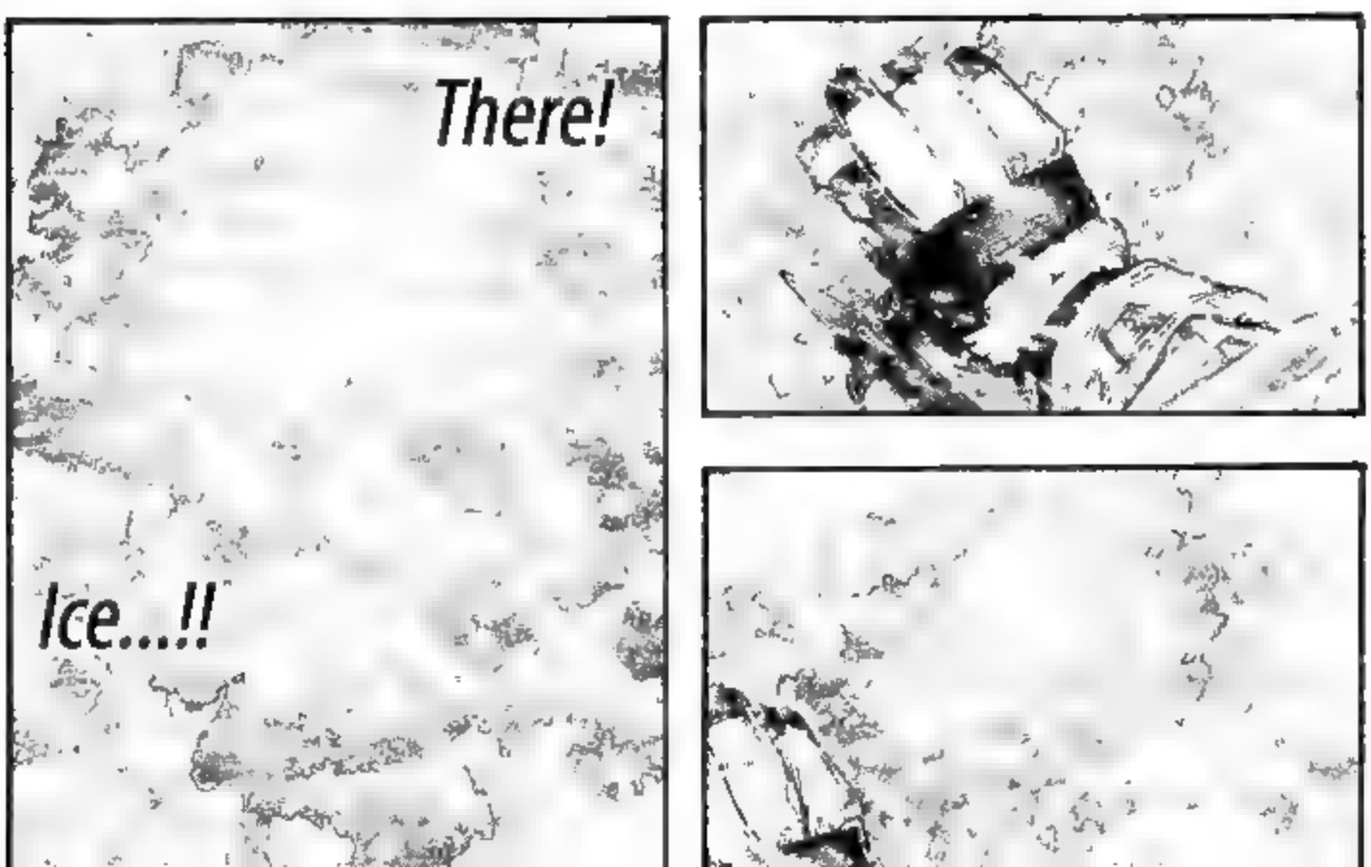




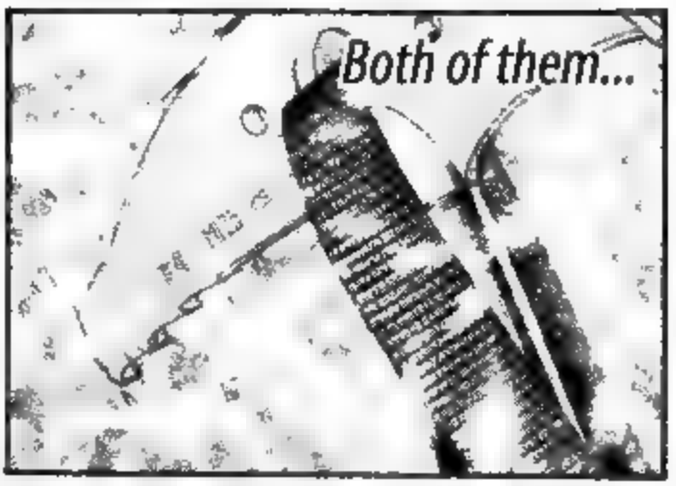




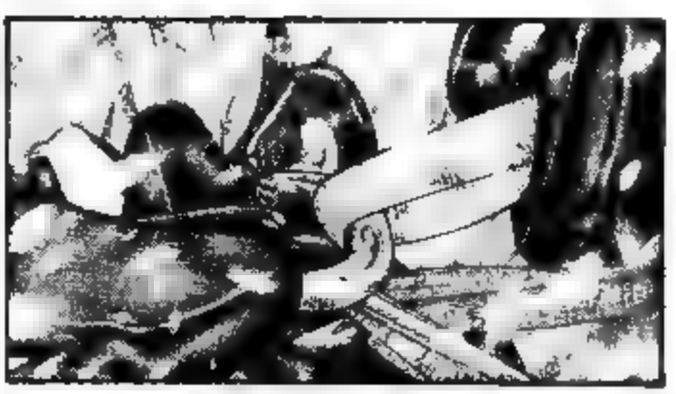
*MIRRORED: NEED TO FIND



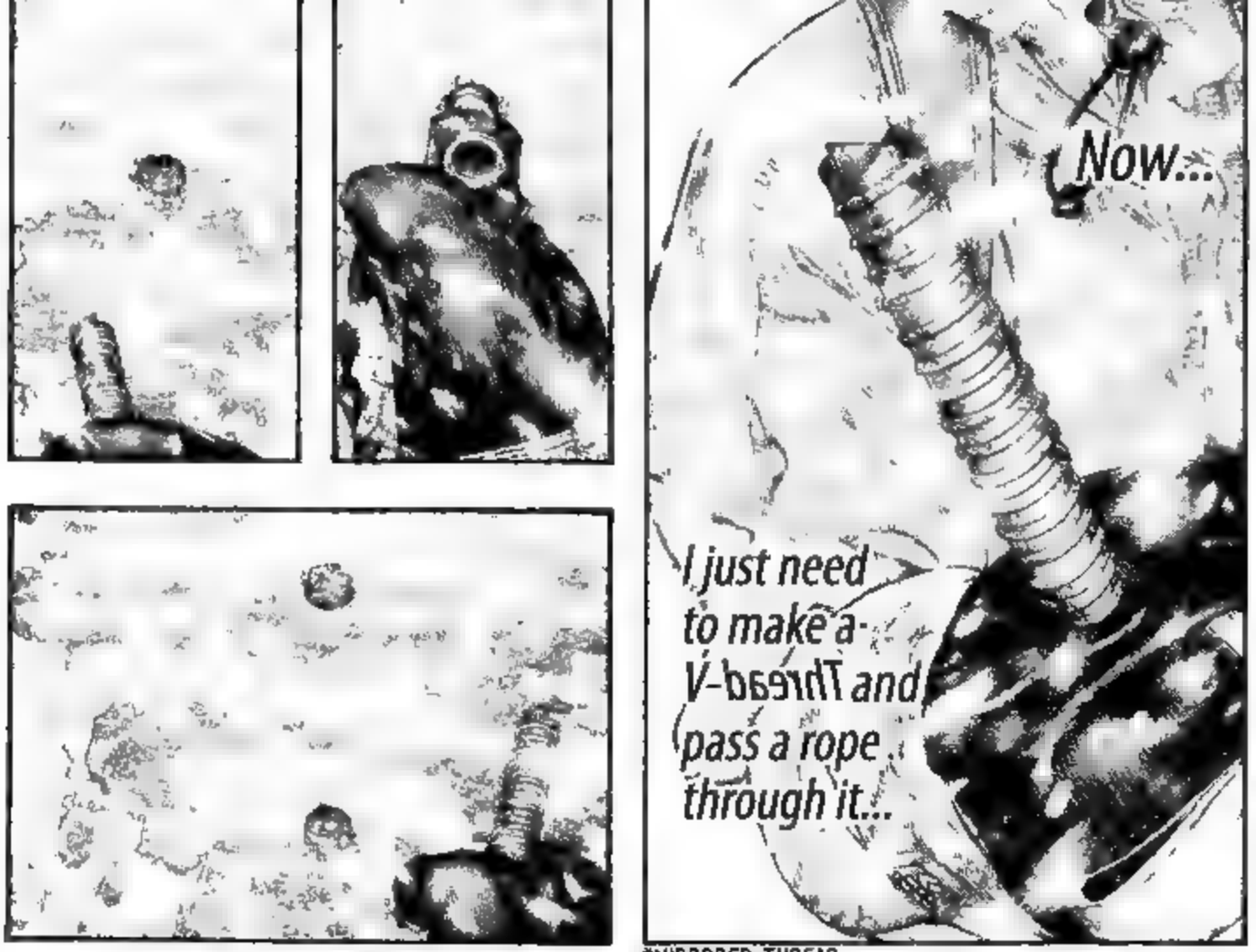
*MIRRORED: PICK



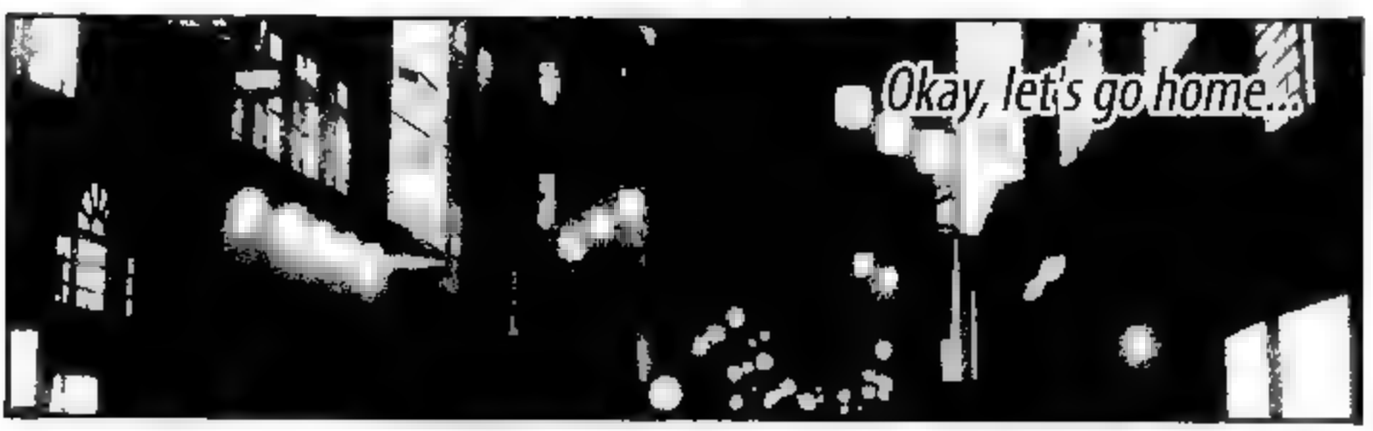
*MIRRORED: COMPLETE



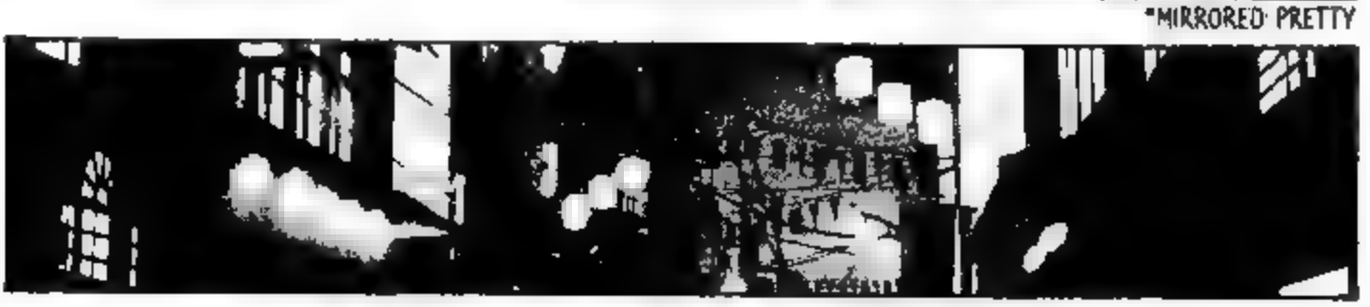
*MIRRORED: OKAY

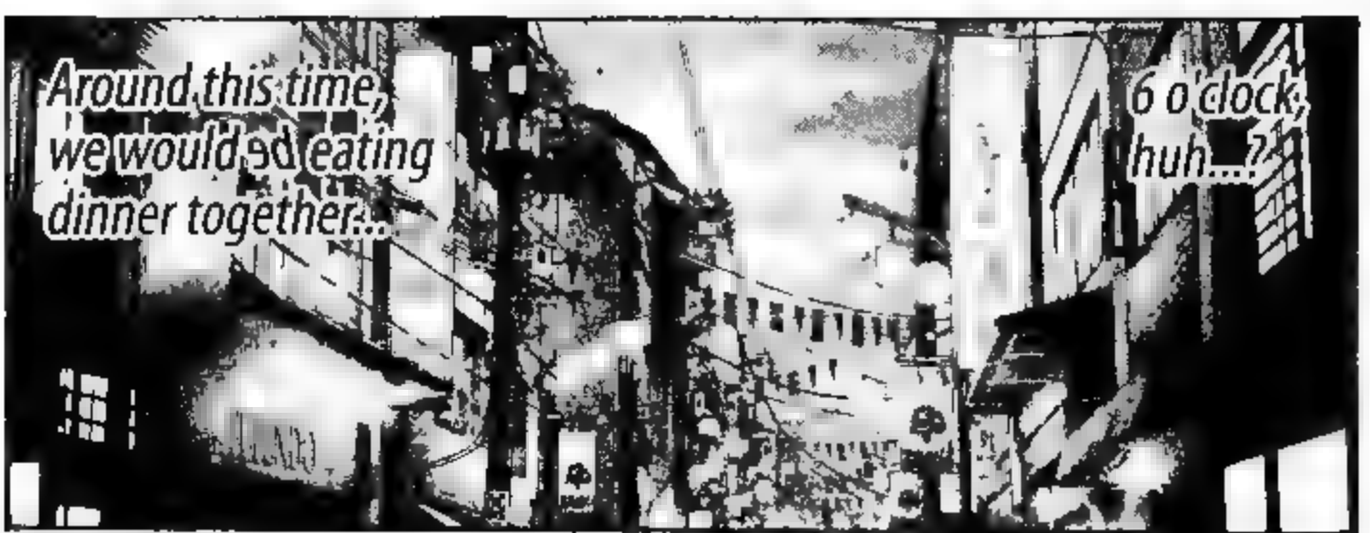


*MIRRORED THREAD



*MIRRORED PRETTY





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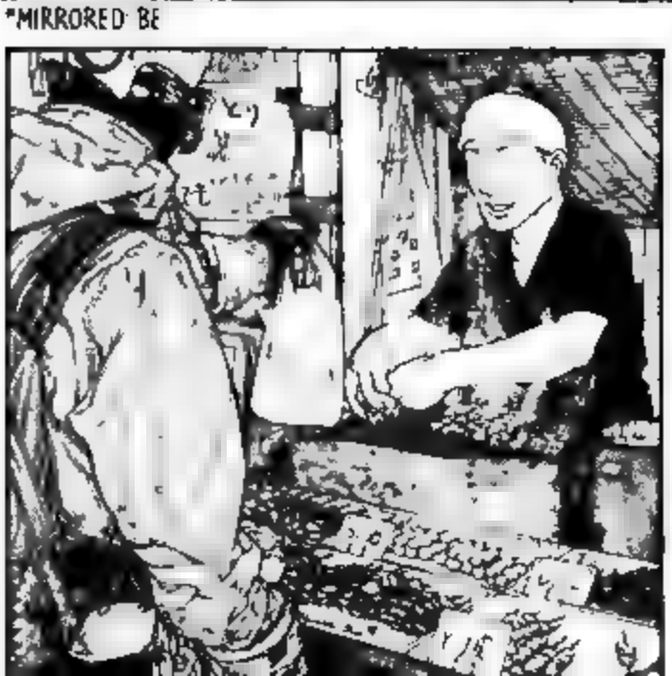
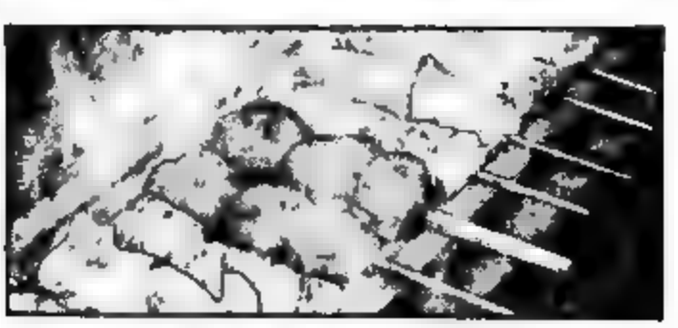
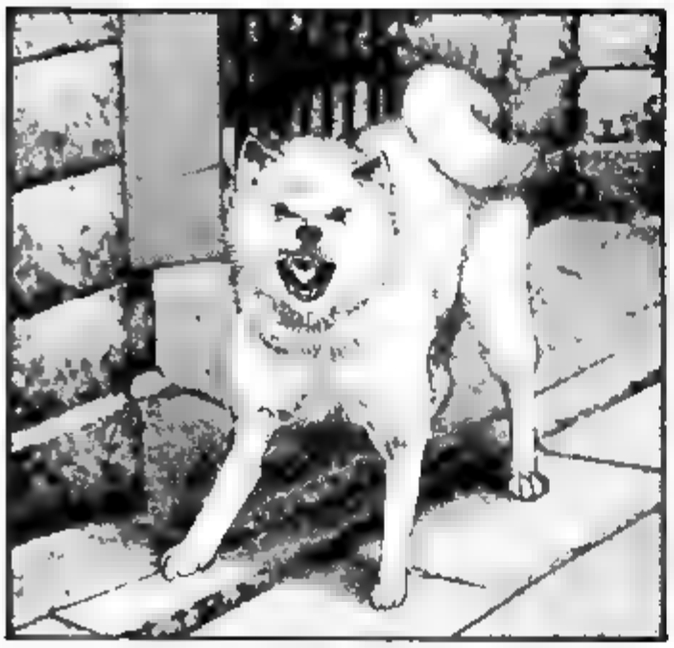
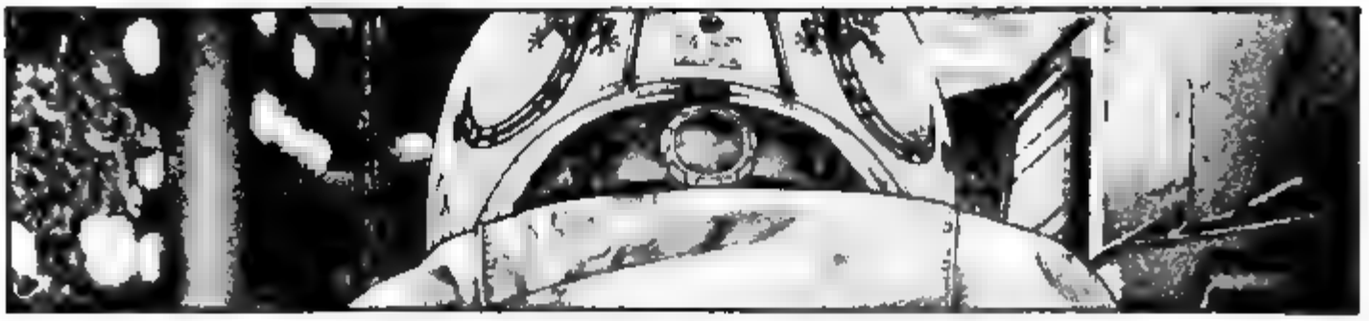
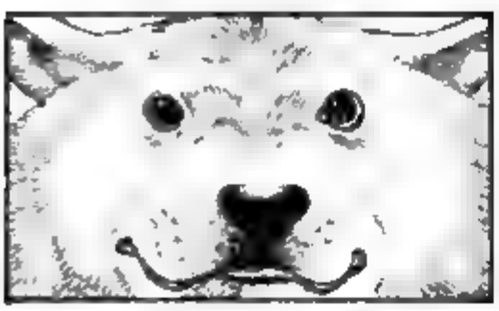
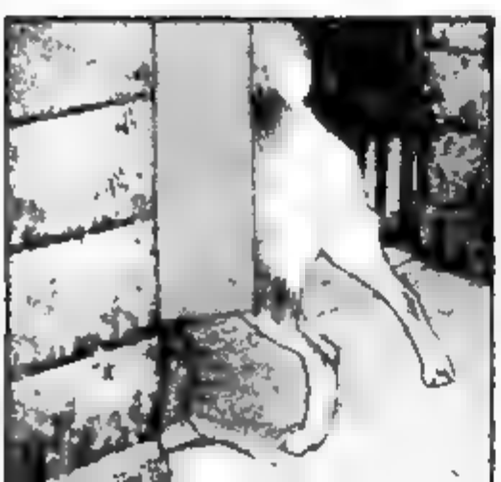






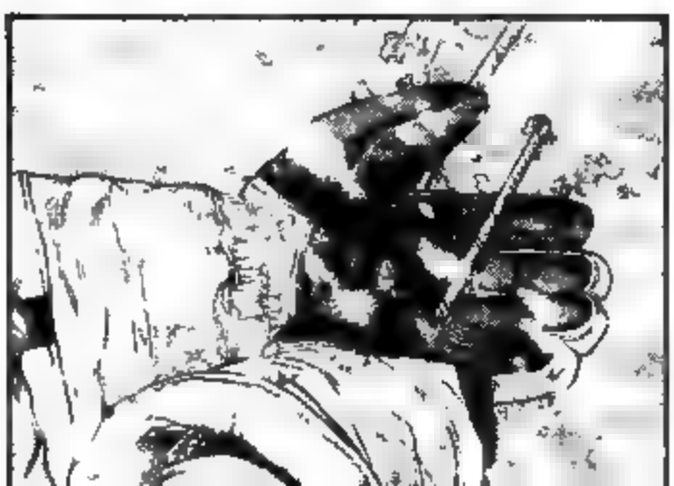


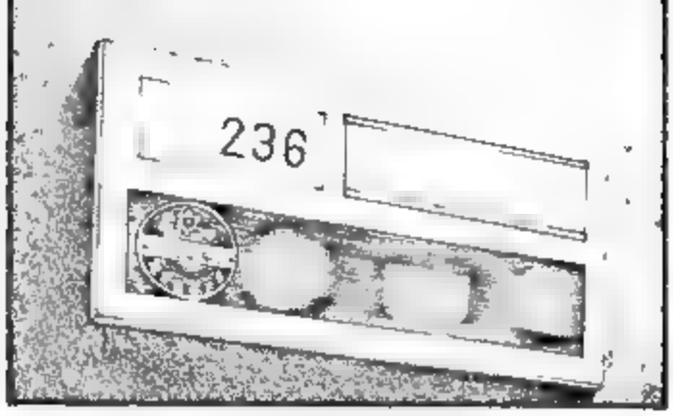


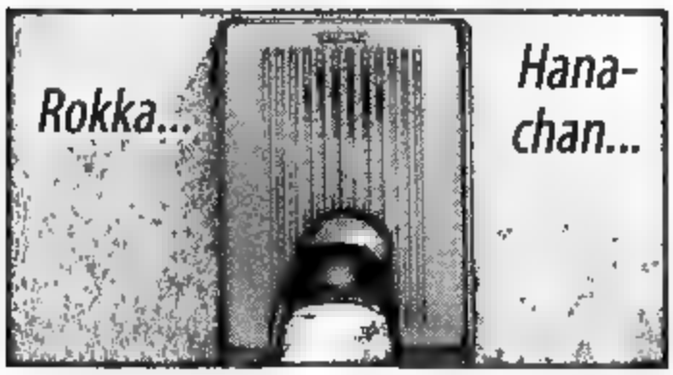


I'll be at my building.
If I just make a turn at building 3...
Second door on the left...
My home is on the second floor.

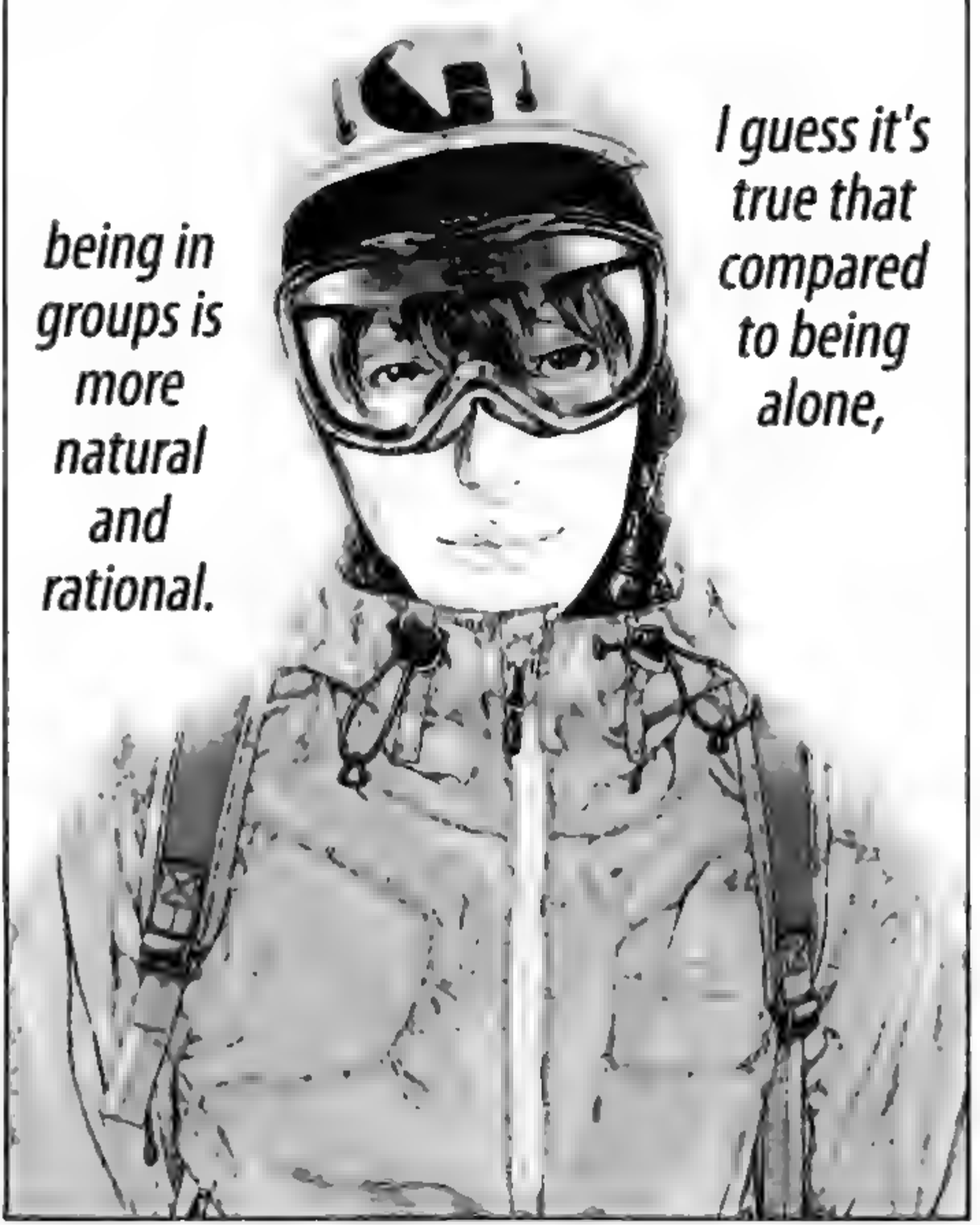
She's probably already back from nursery school...
Ah...

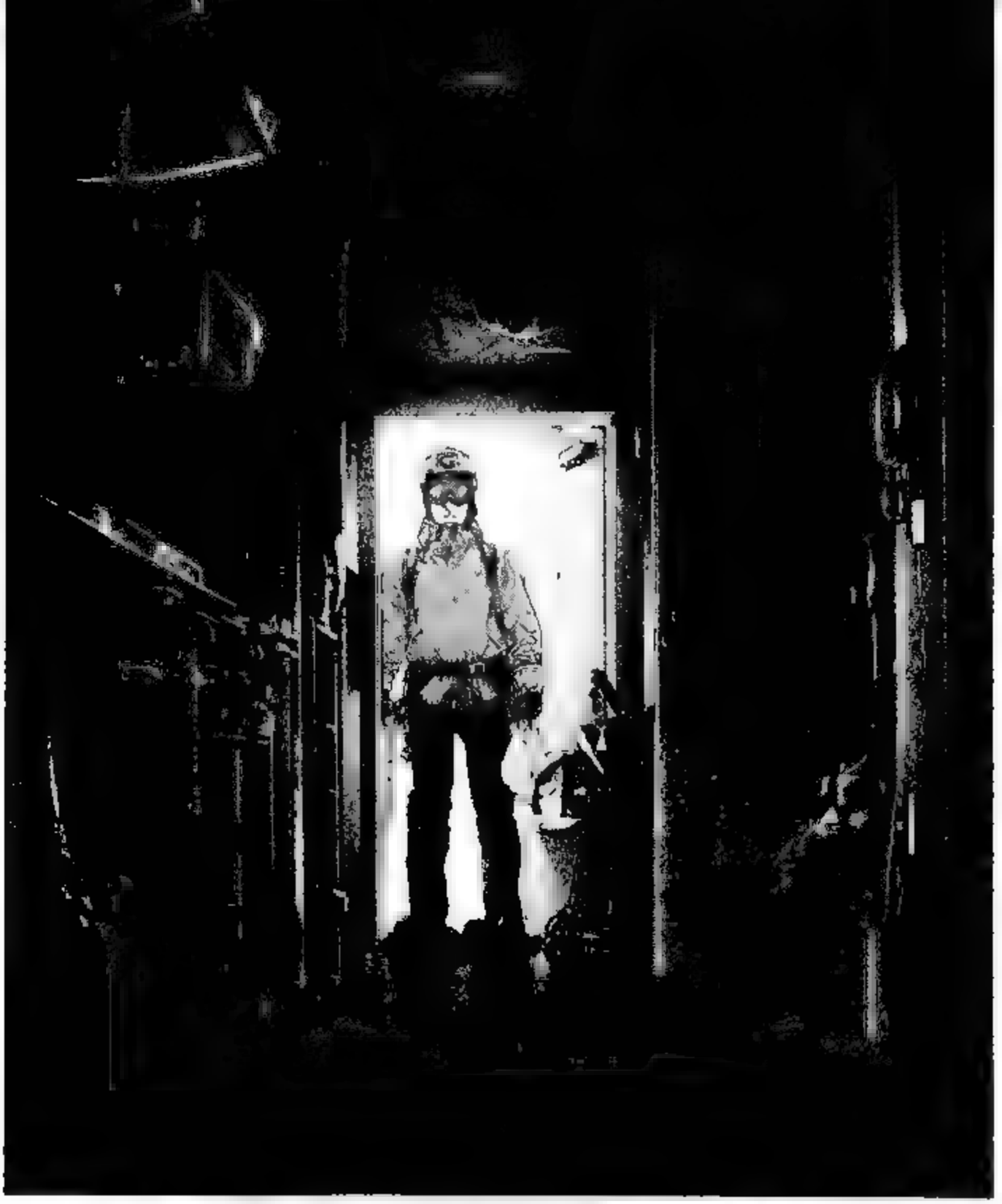


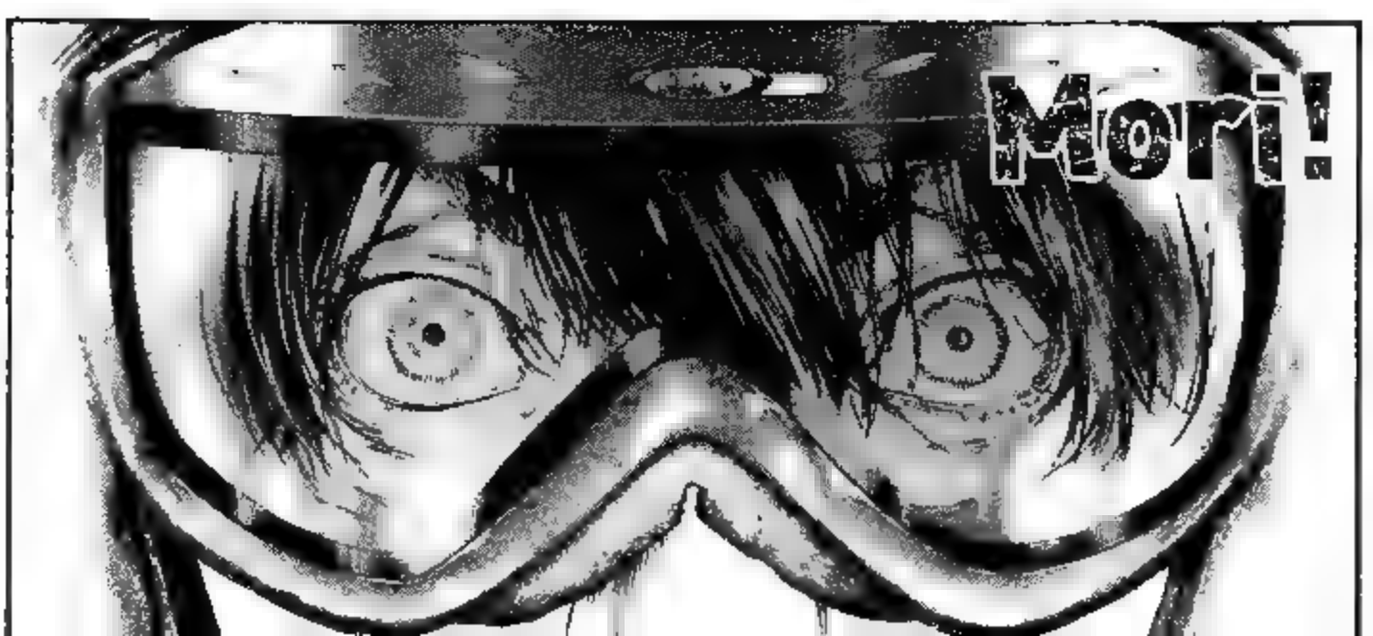

236


Rokka...
Hana-
chan...

When I was able to be together with everyone, I was truly happy.


being in groups is more natural and rational.
I guess it's true that compared to being alone,




Mori!

You...
have broken your pact with the moun- tain.

Therefore the mountain...

can no longer take any responsibility for your life.

KOKOU NO HITO

by Authors: NABEDA Yoshiro and NITTA Jiro
by Artist: SAKAMOTO Shinichi

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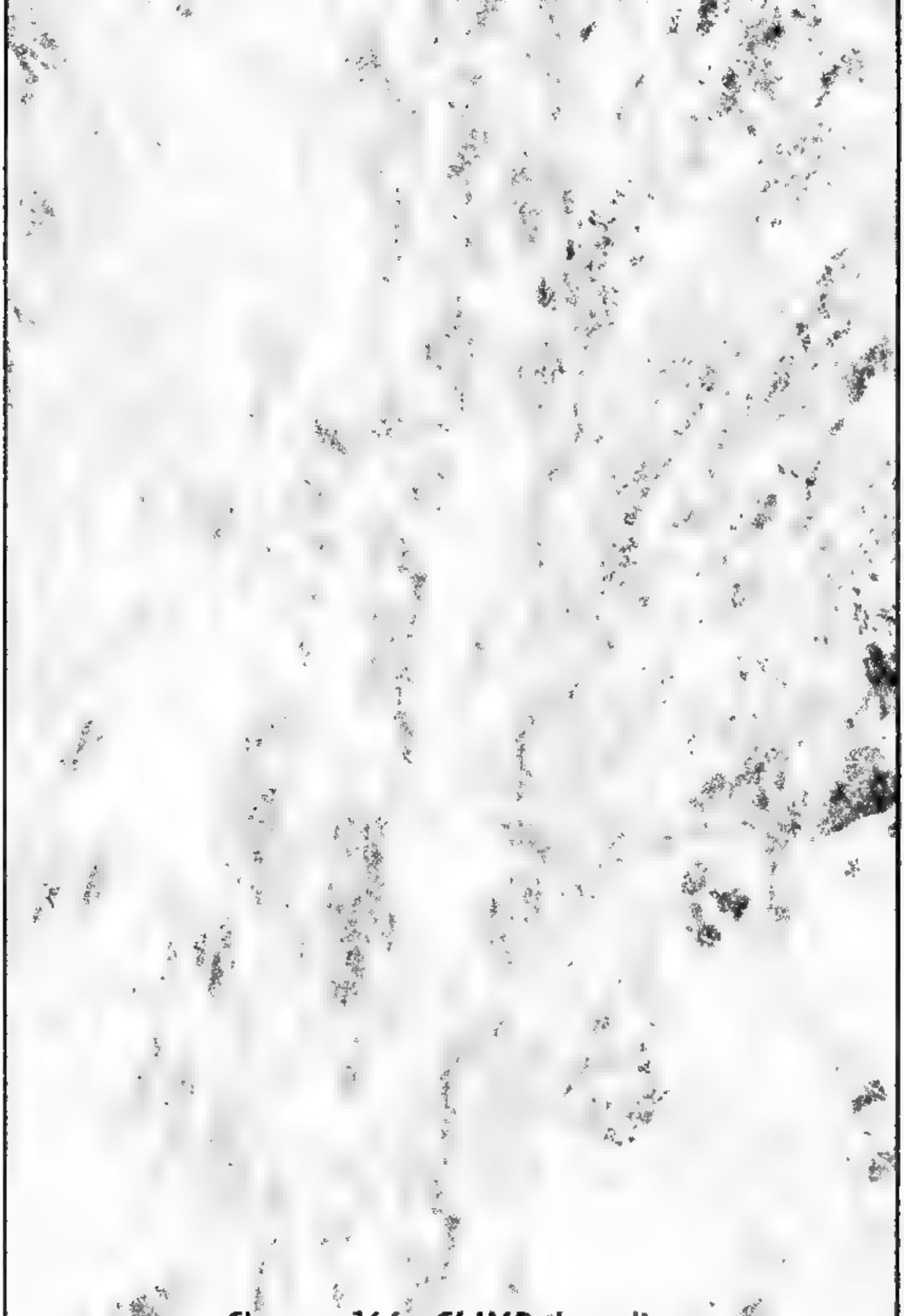
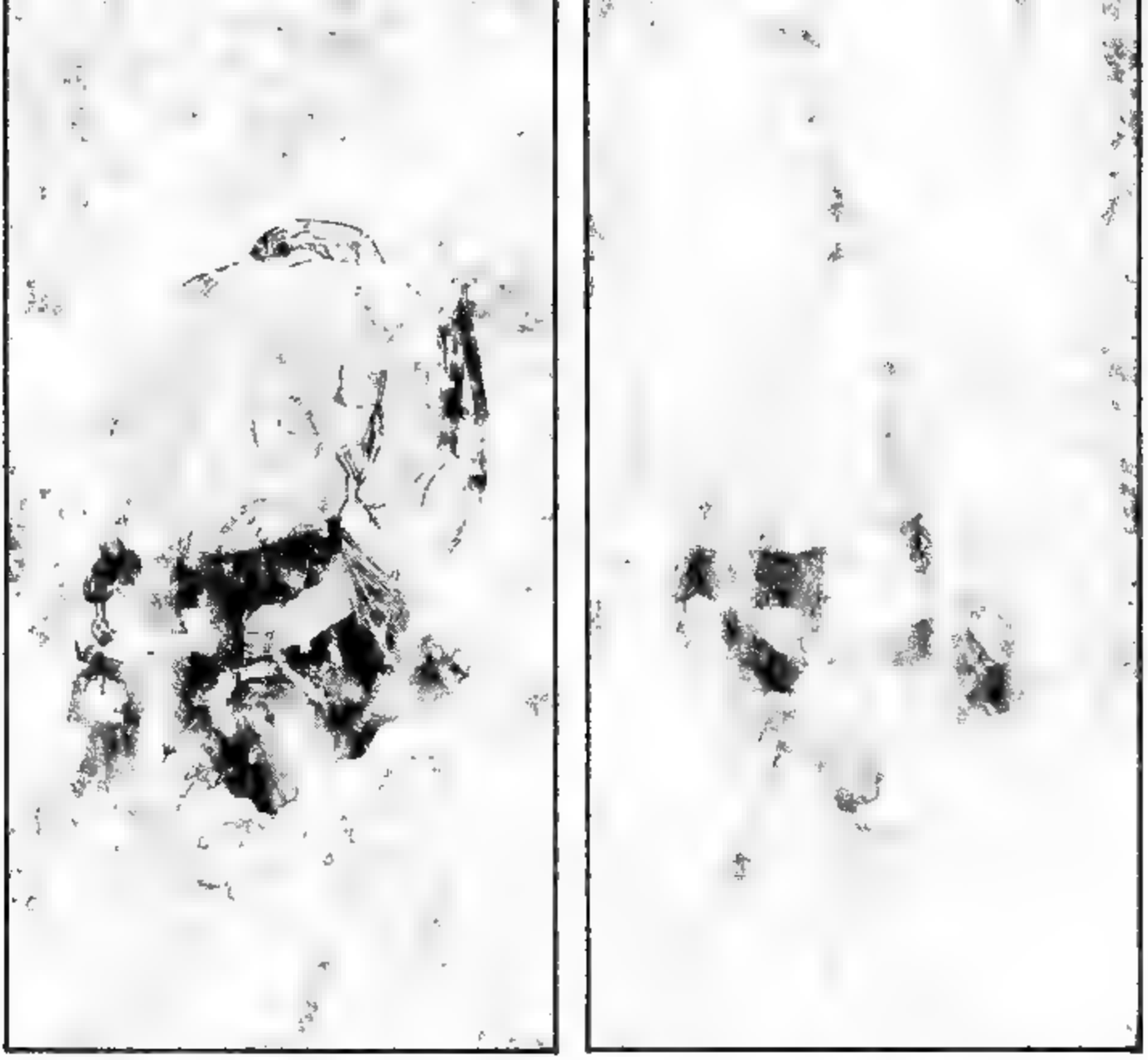
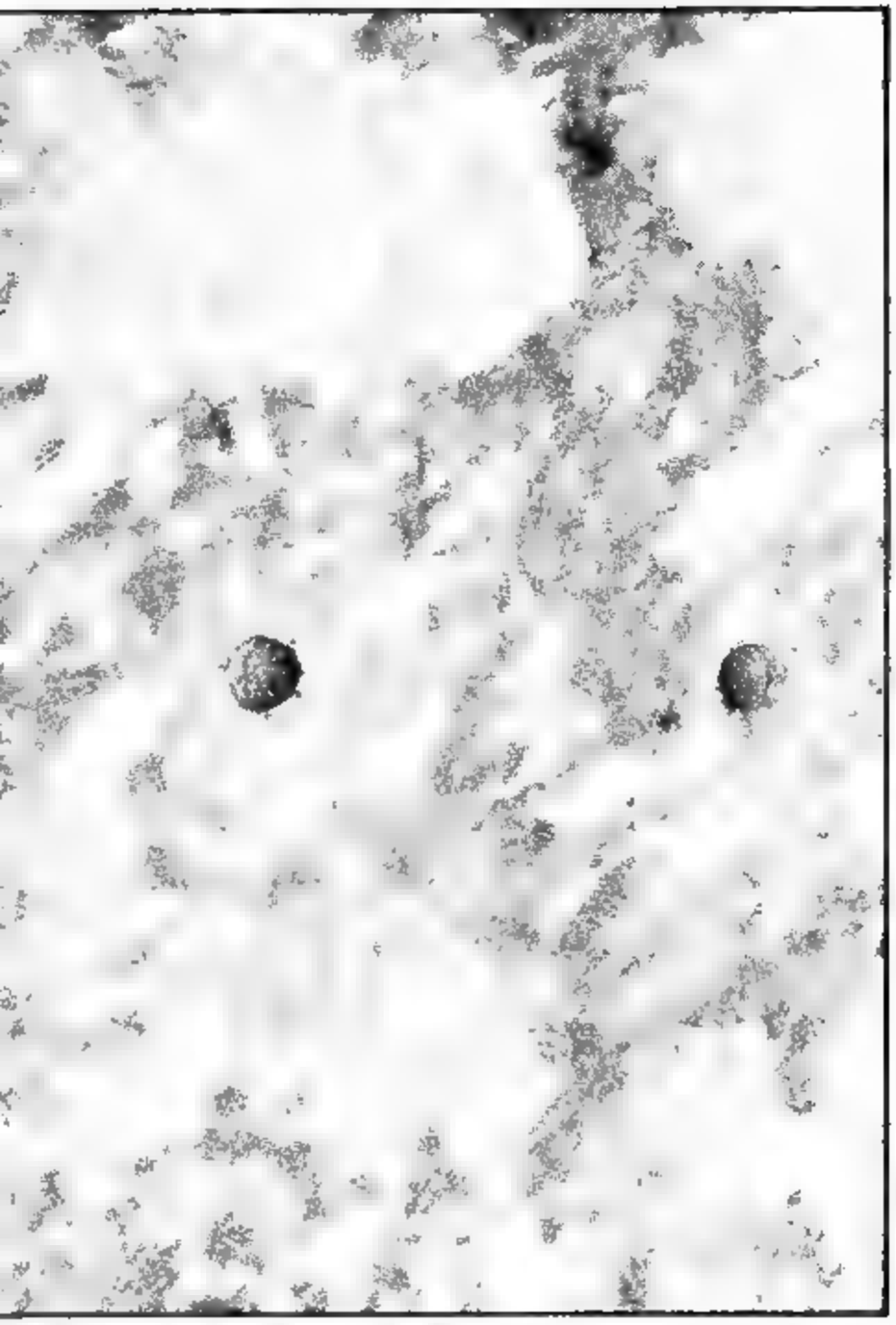
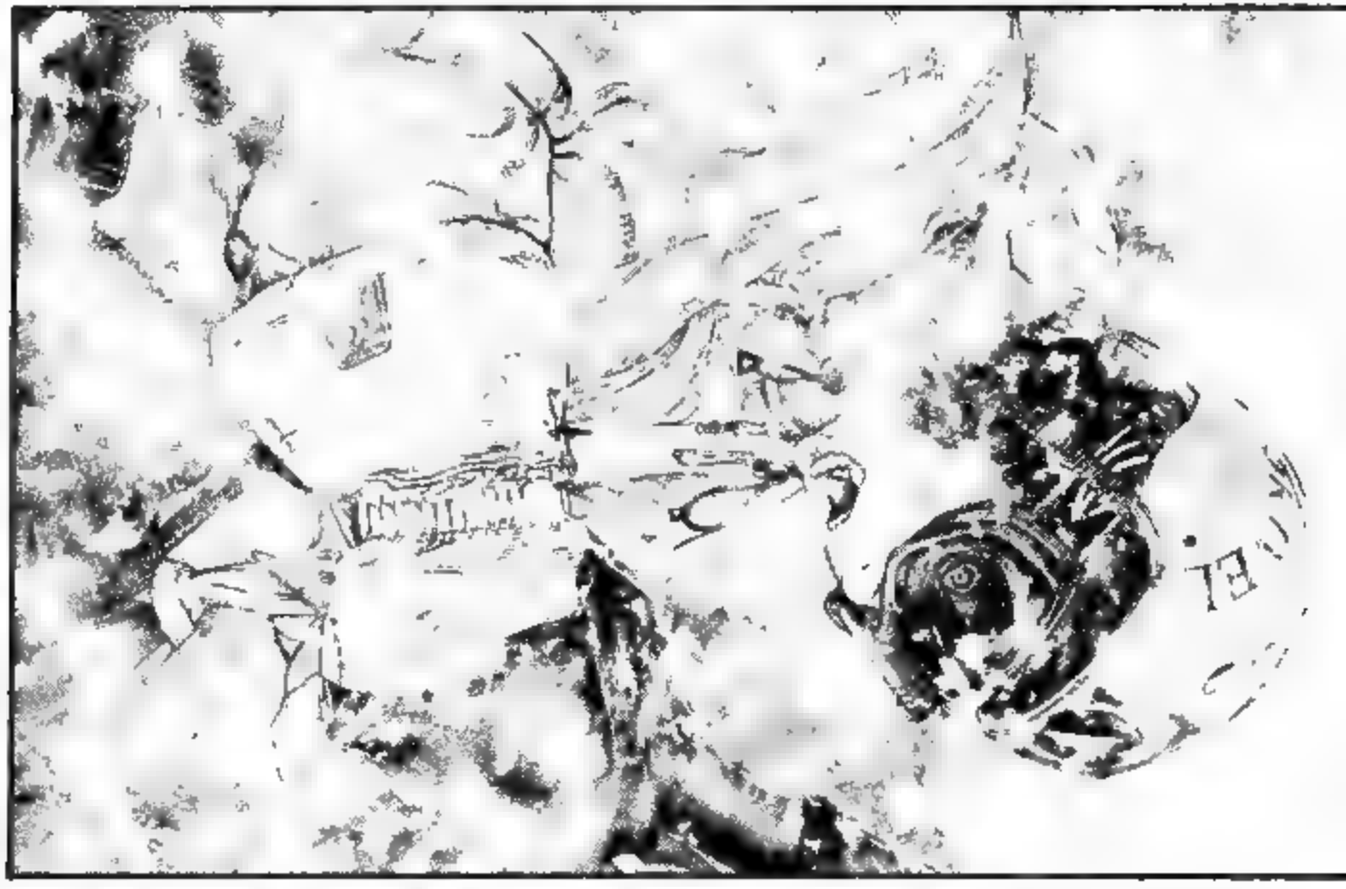
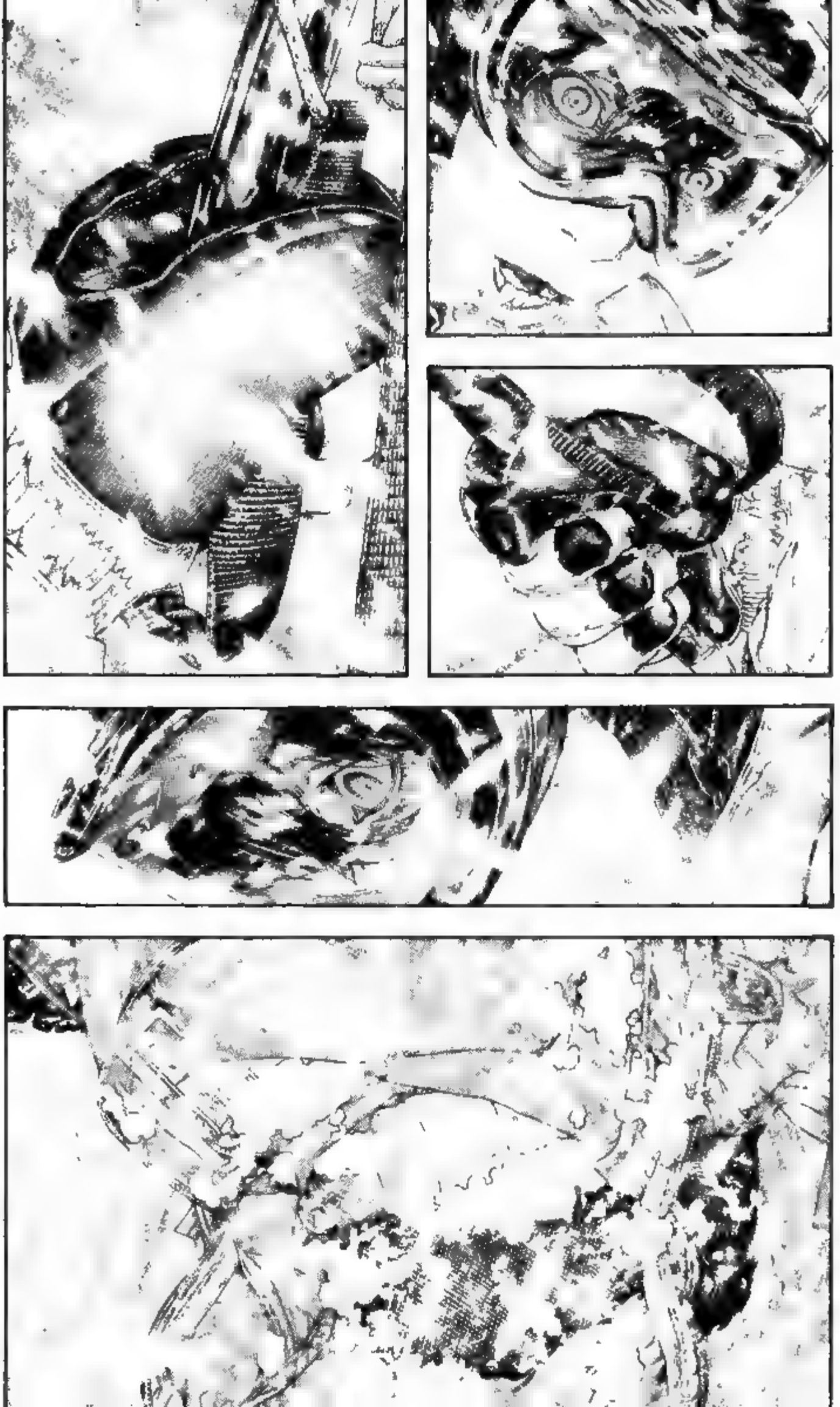


Chapter 166 -*CLIMB*- Loneliness



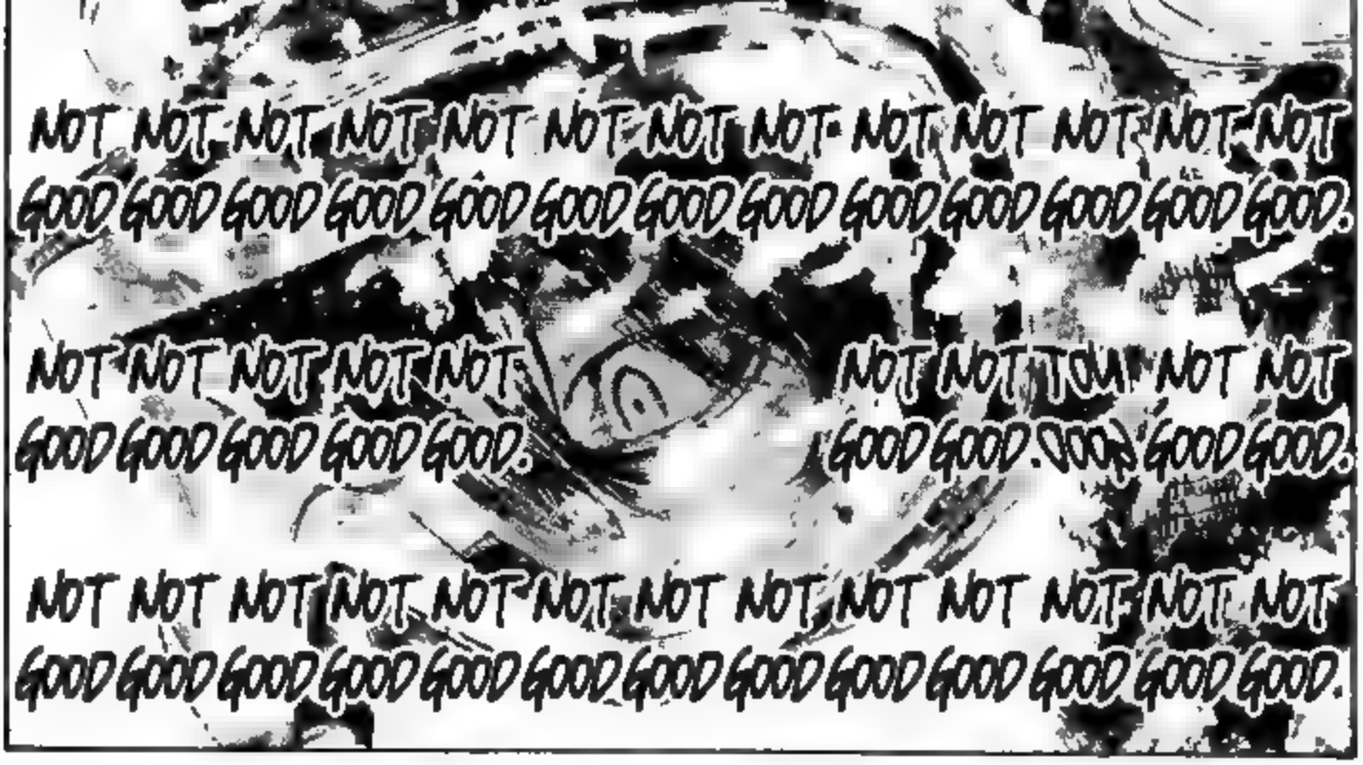






It's
gone.

The climbing rope is gone—...


NOT NOT NOT NOT NOT NOT NOT NOT NOT NOT NOT NOT NOT NOT
GOOD GOOD GOOD GOOD GOOD GOOD GOOD GOOD GOOD GOOD GOOD GOOD GOOD GOOD.
NOT NOT NOT NOT NOT
GOOD GOOD GOOD GOOD GOOD.
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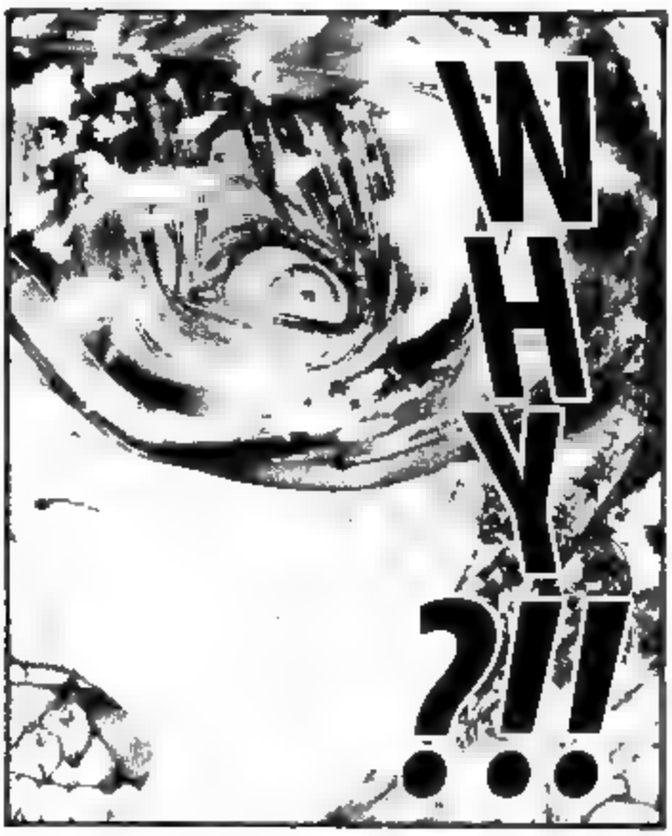
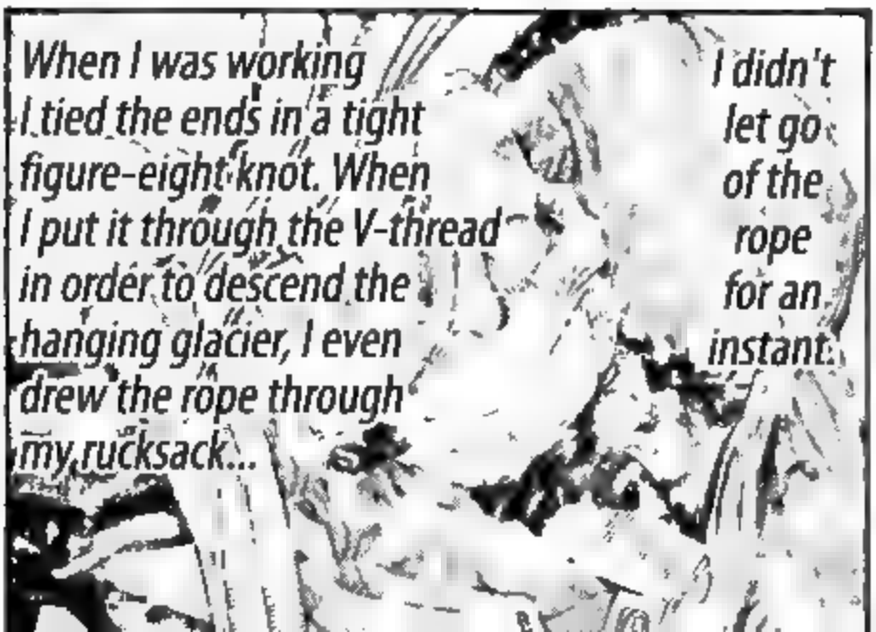
NOT NOT NOT NOT NOT NOT NOT NOT NOT NOT NOT NOT NOT NOT
GOOD GOOD GOOD GOOD GOOD GOOD GOOD GOOD GOOD GOOD GOOD GOOD GOOD GOOD.

why? why? why? why? why? why?
why? why? why? SYNN SYNN why?
why? why? why? why? why? why? why? why?

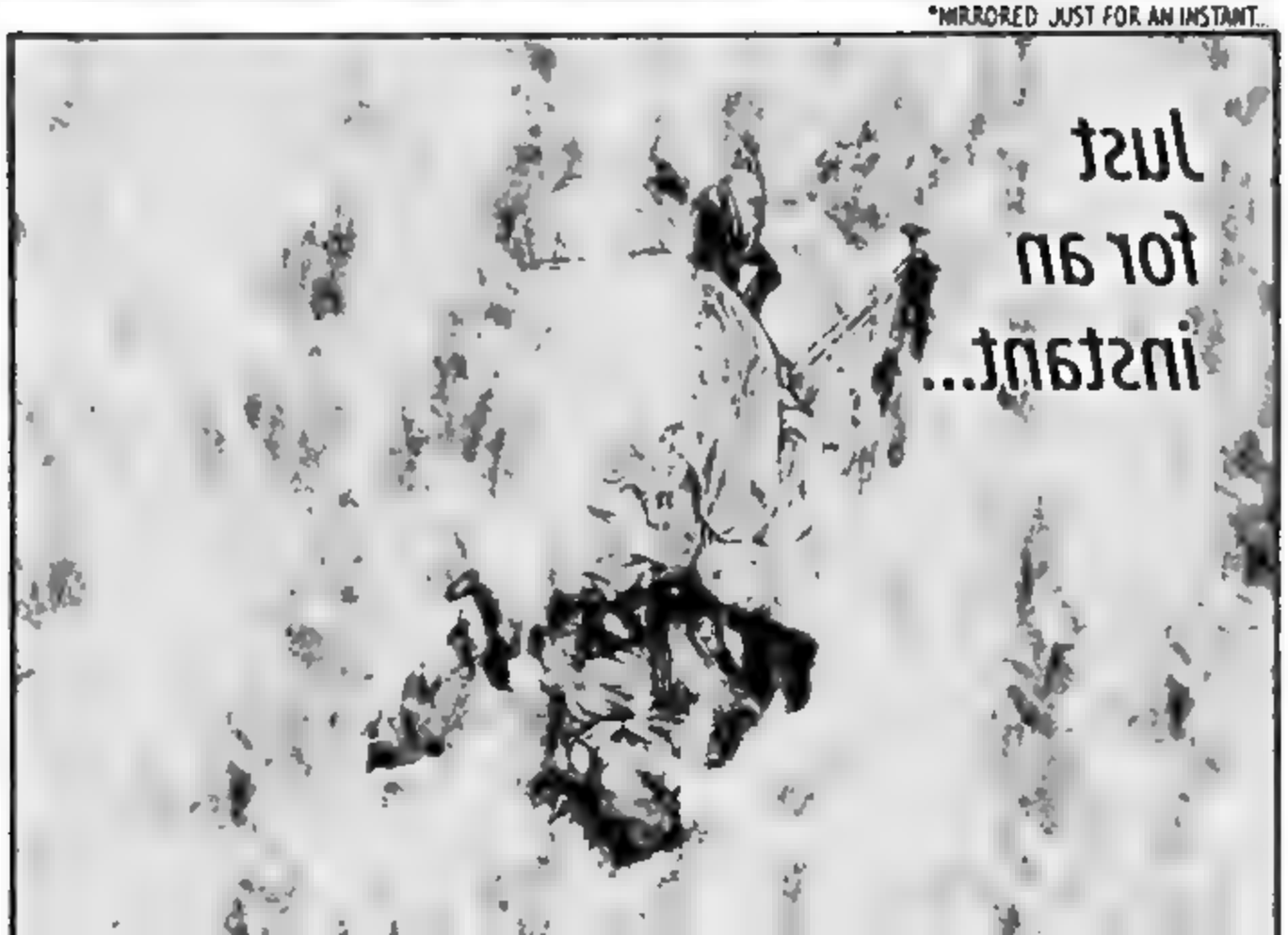

WHY?!!

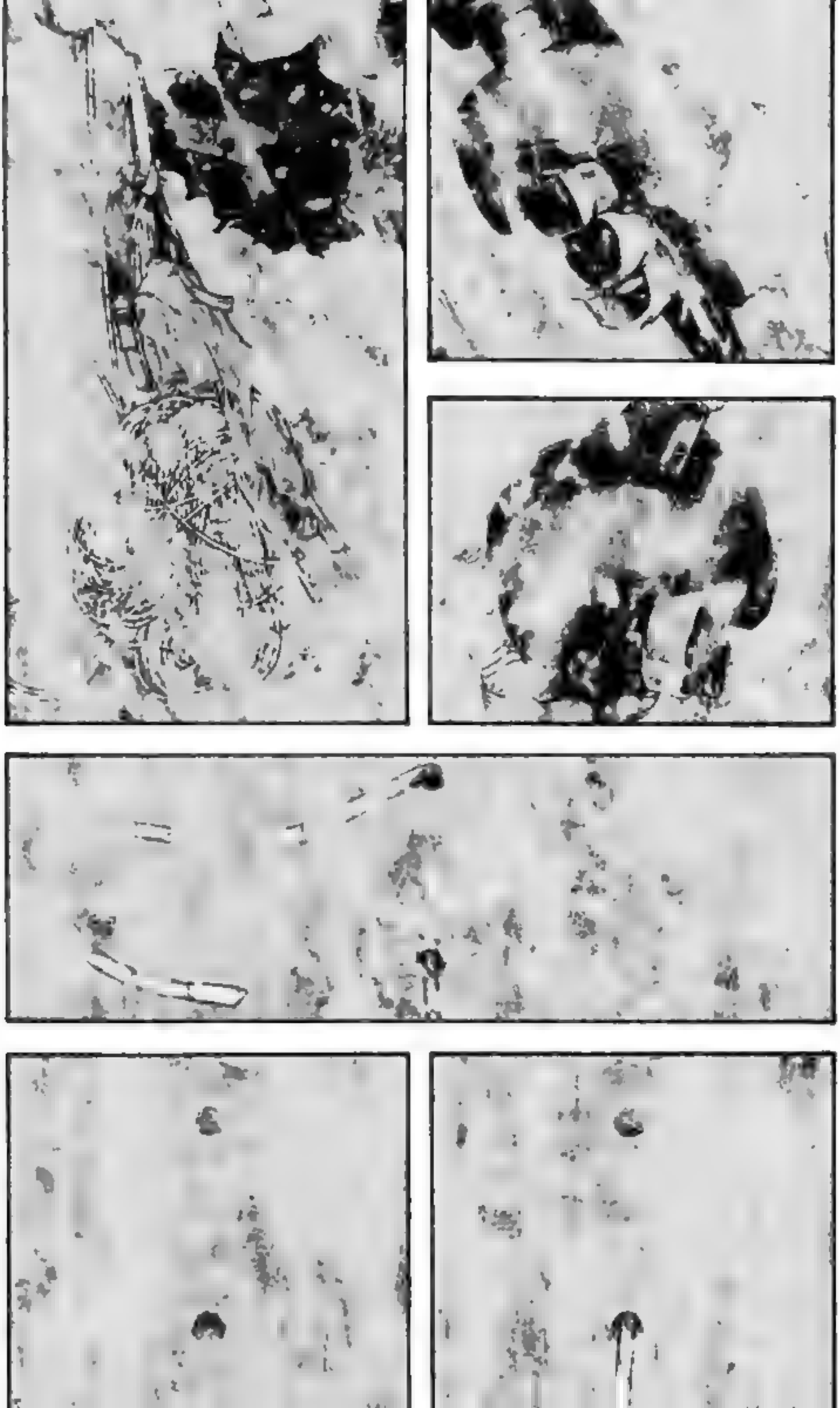
Why is it not here?!!
Why is it not here?!!

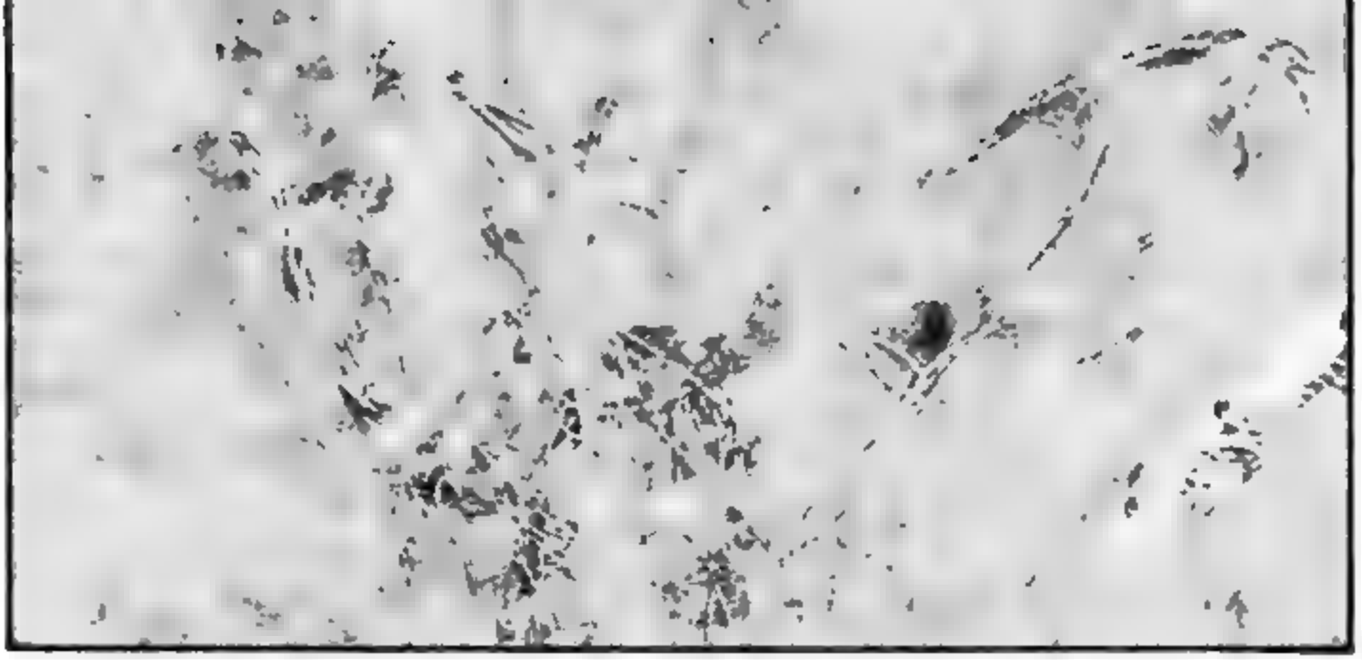
No...

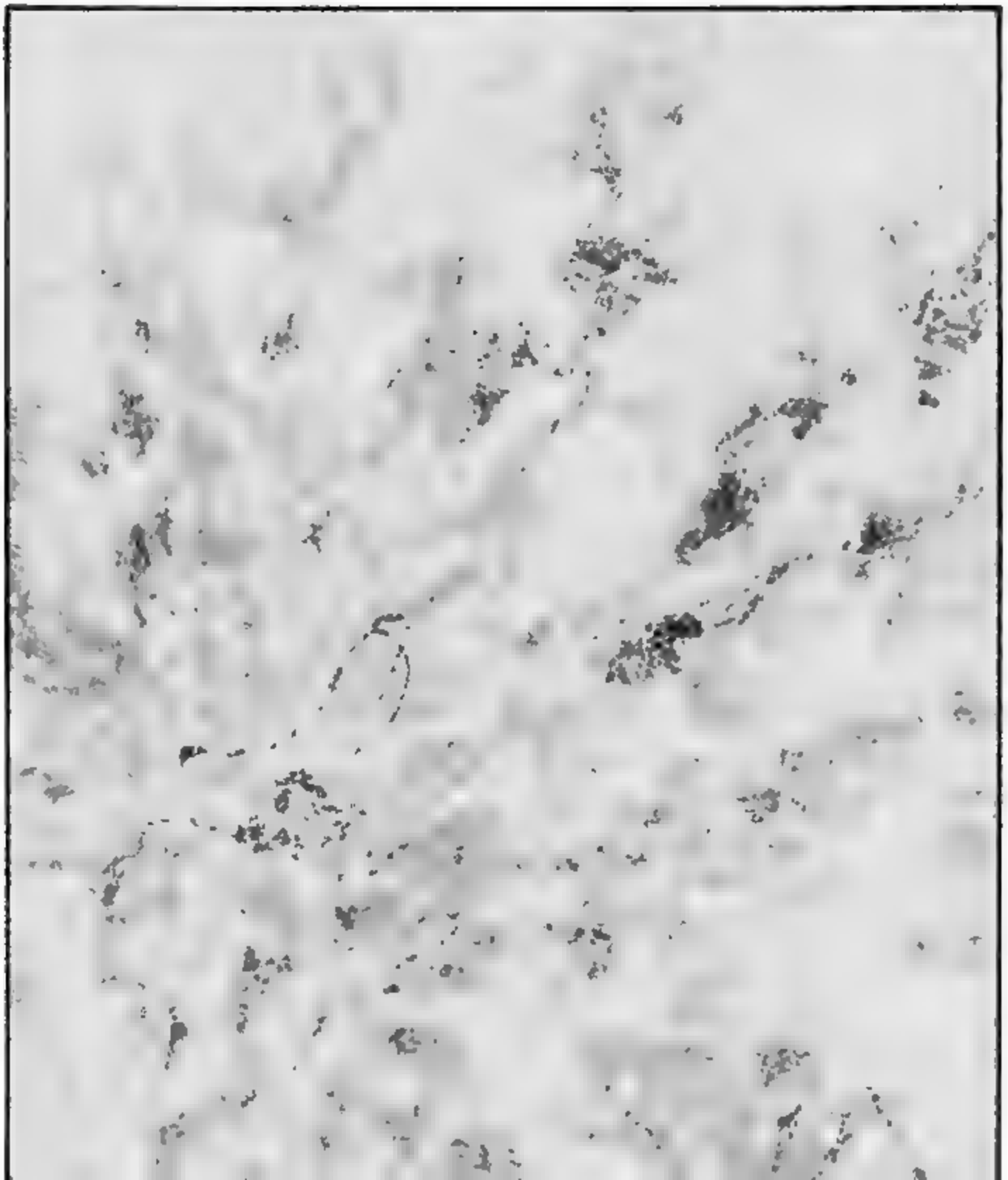

When I was working I tied the ends in a tight figure-eight knot. When I put it through the V-thread in order to descend the hanging glacier, I even drew the rope through my rucksack...
I didn't let go of the rope for an instant.

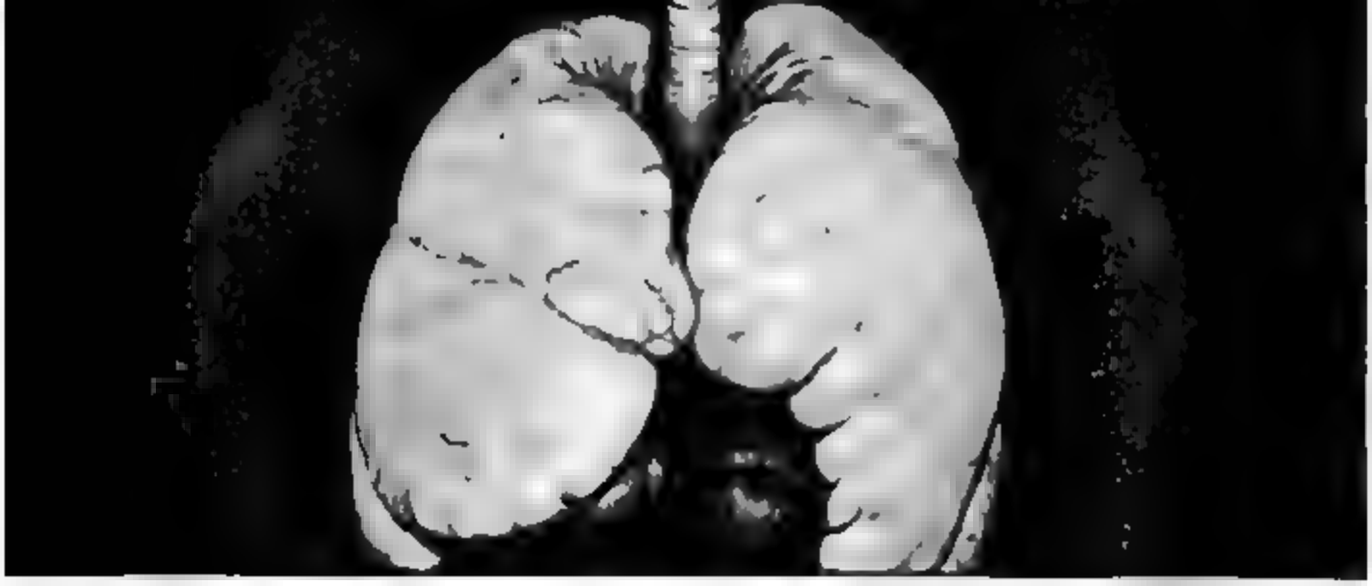
*MIRRORED JUST FOR AN INSTANT...

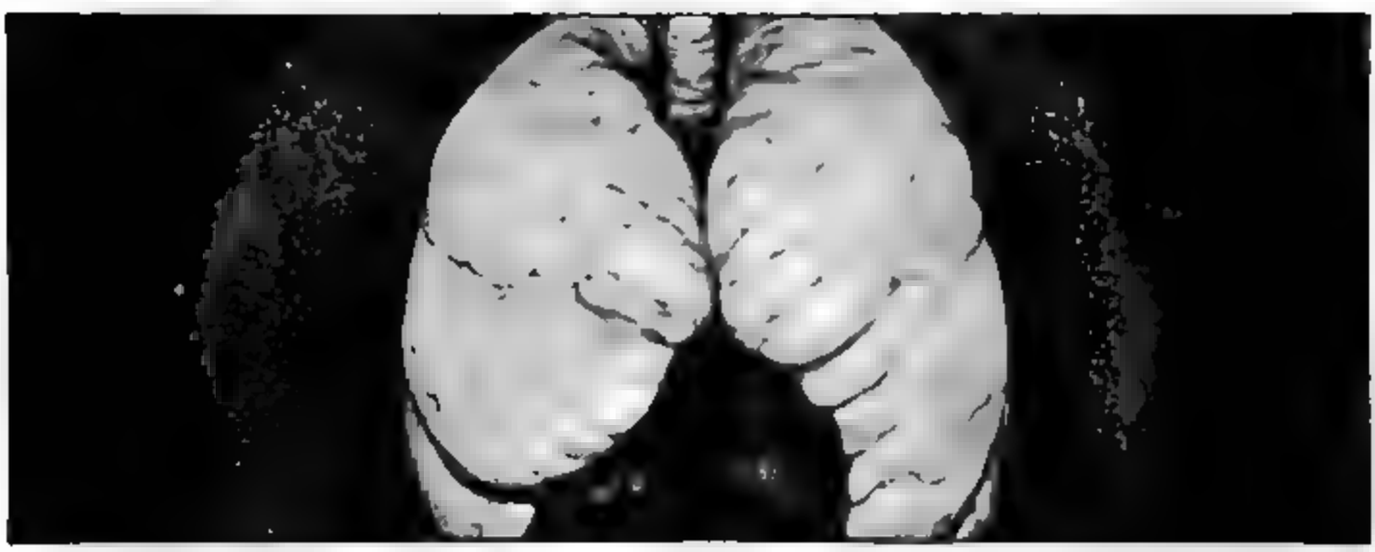


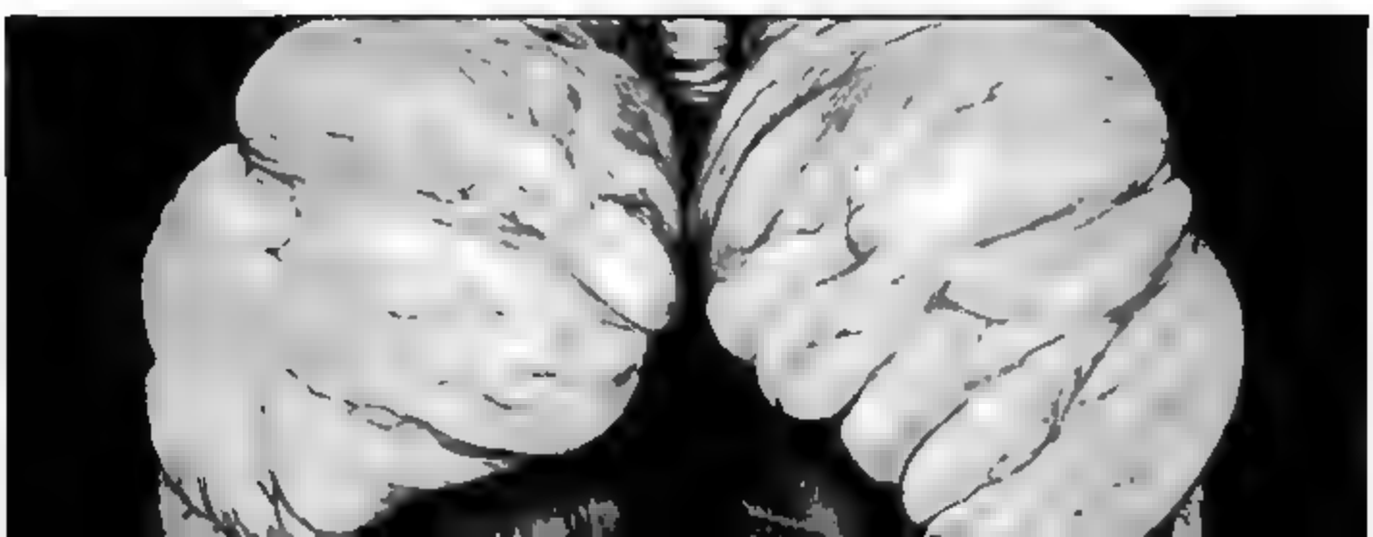


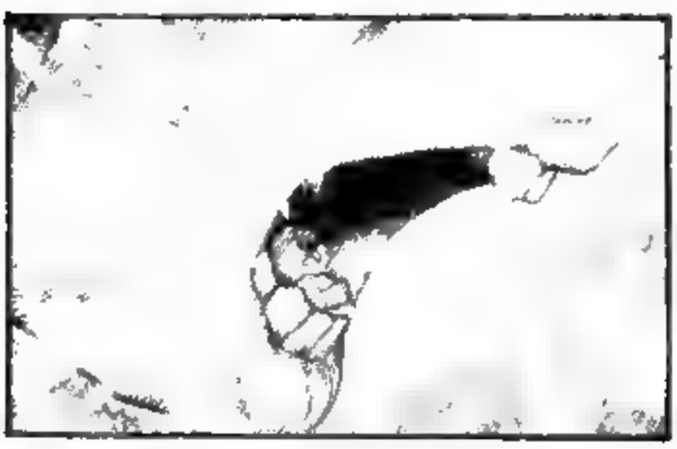


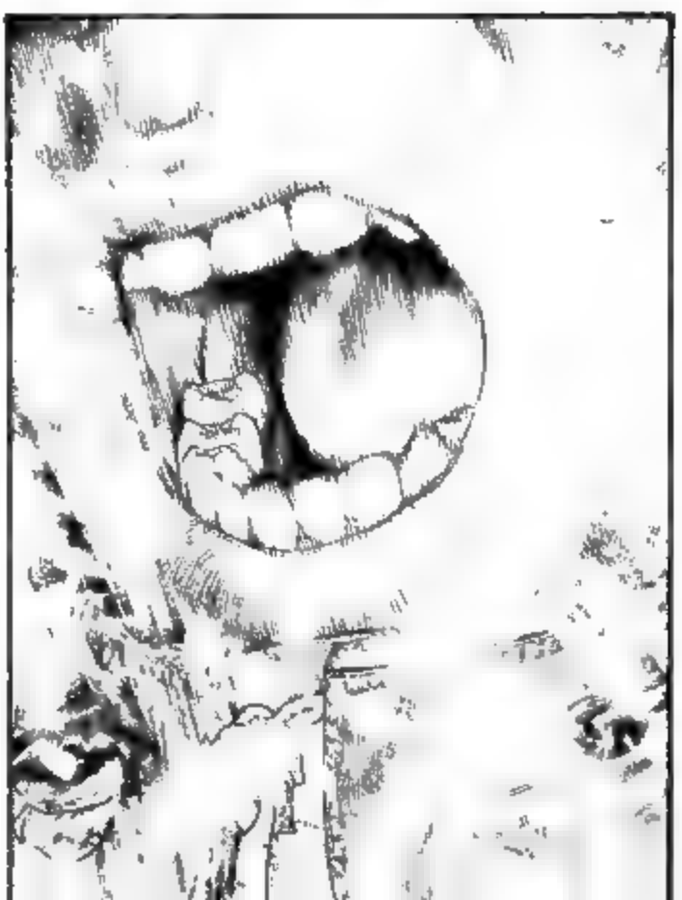


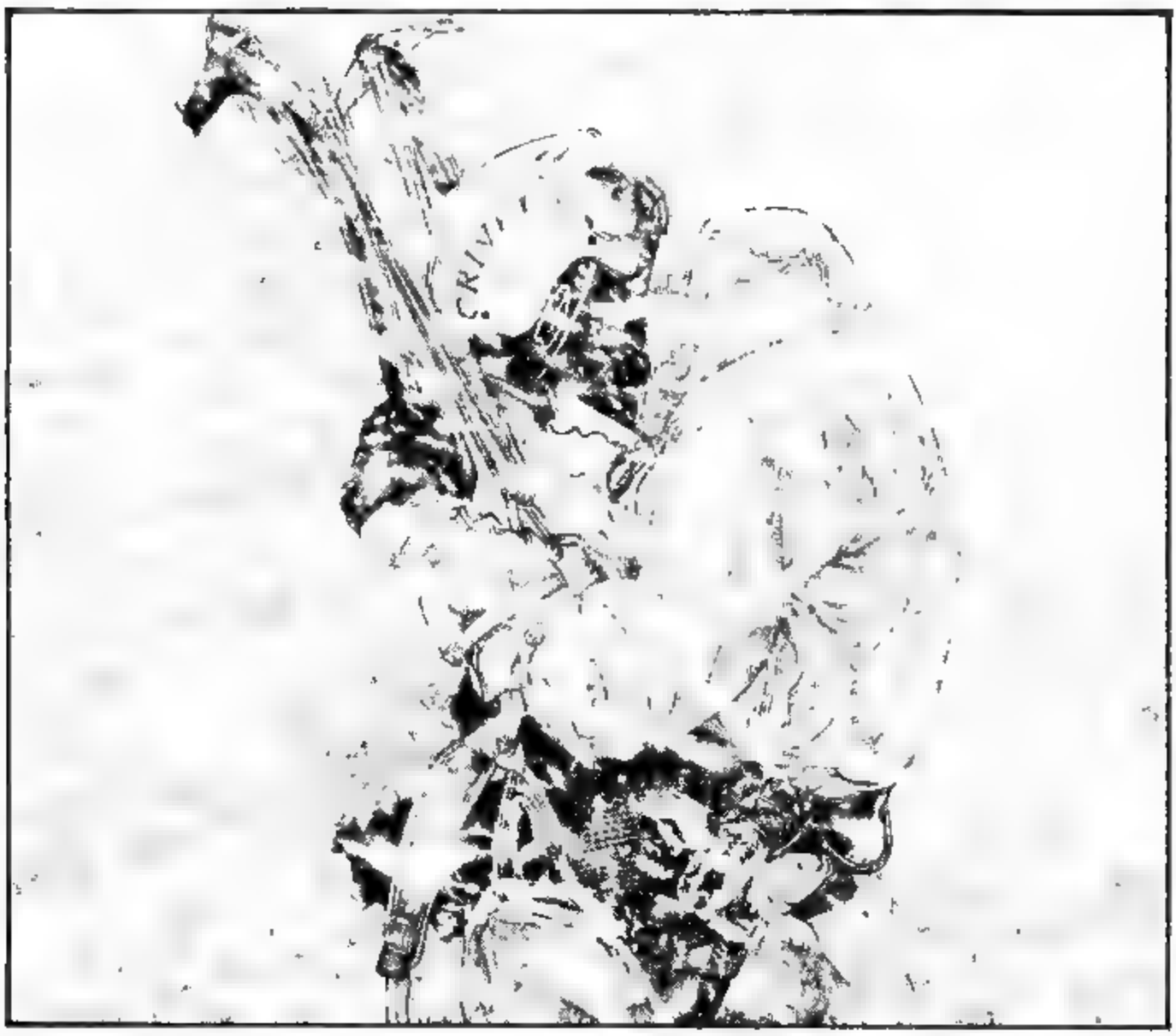








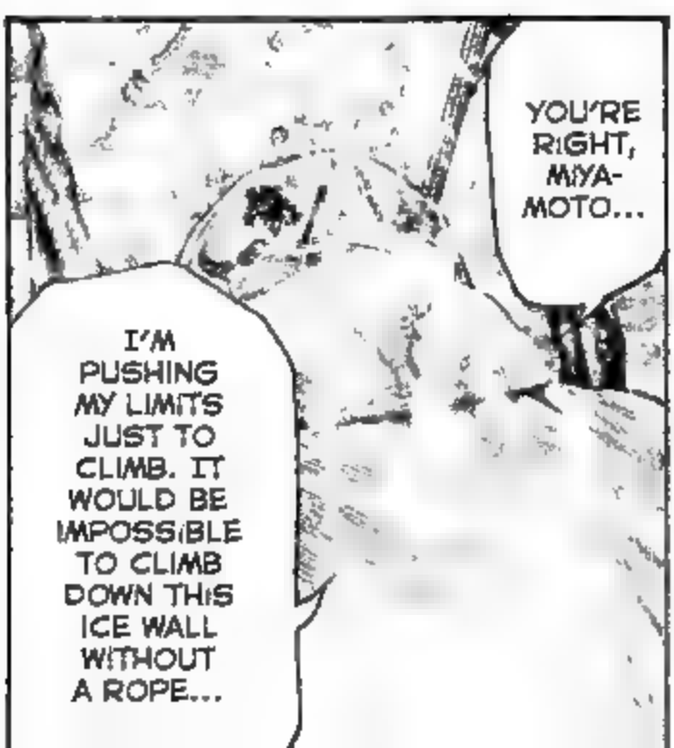


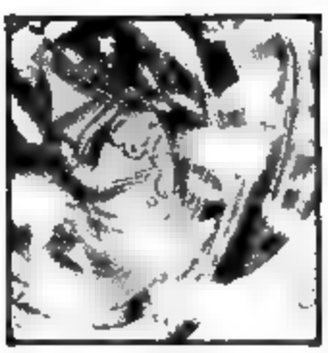


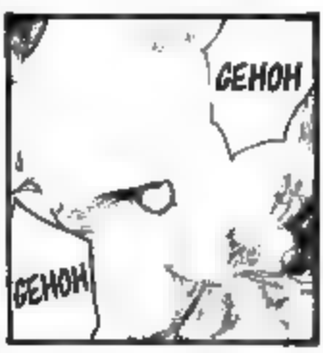
without a rope...?
Should I try to do it...

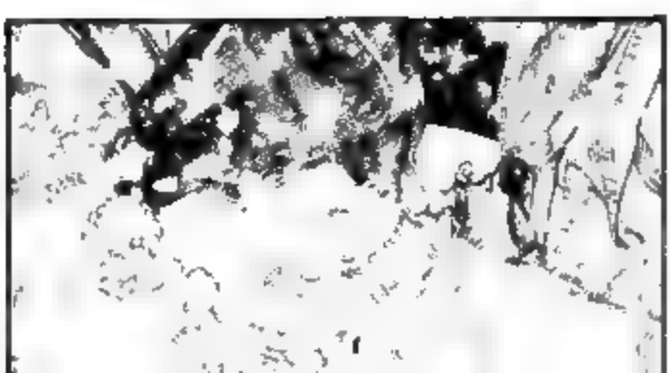
DESCENDING IS MUCH HARDER THAN CLIMBING UP!!!
DON'T STICK YOUR NOSE IN!!

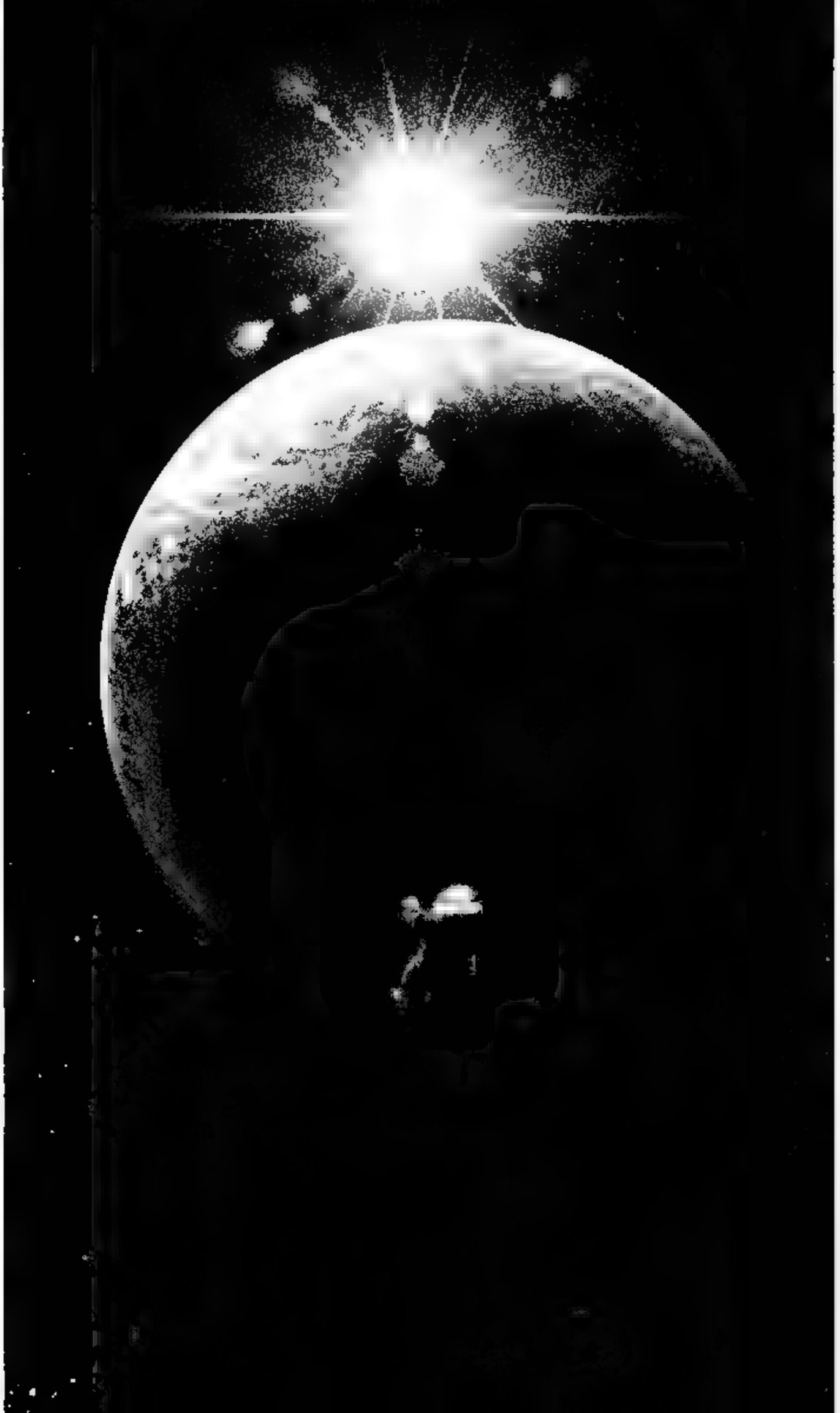
BUT THAT'S THE ONLY WAY I CAN GET BACK ALIVE!!!
I KNOW THAT!!!

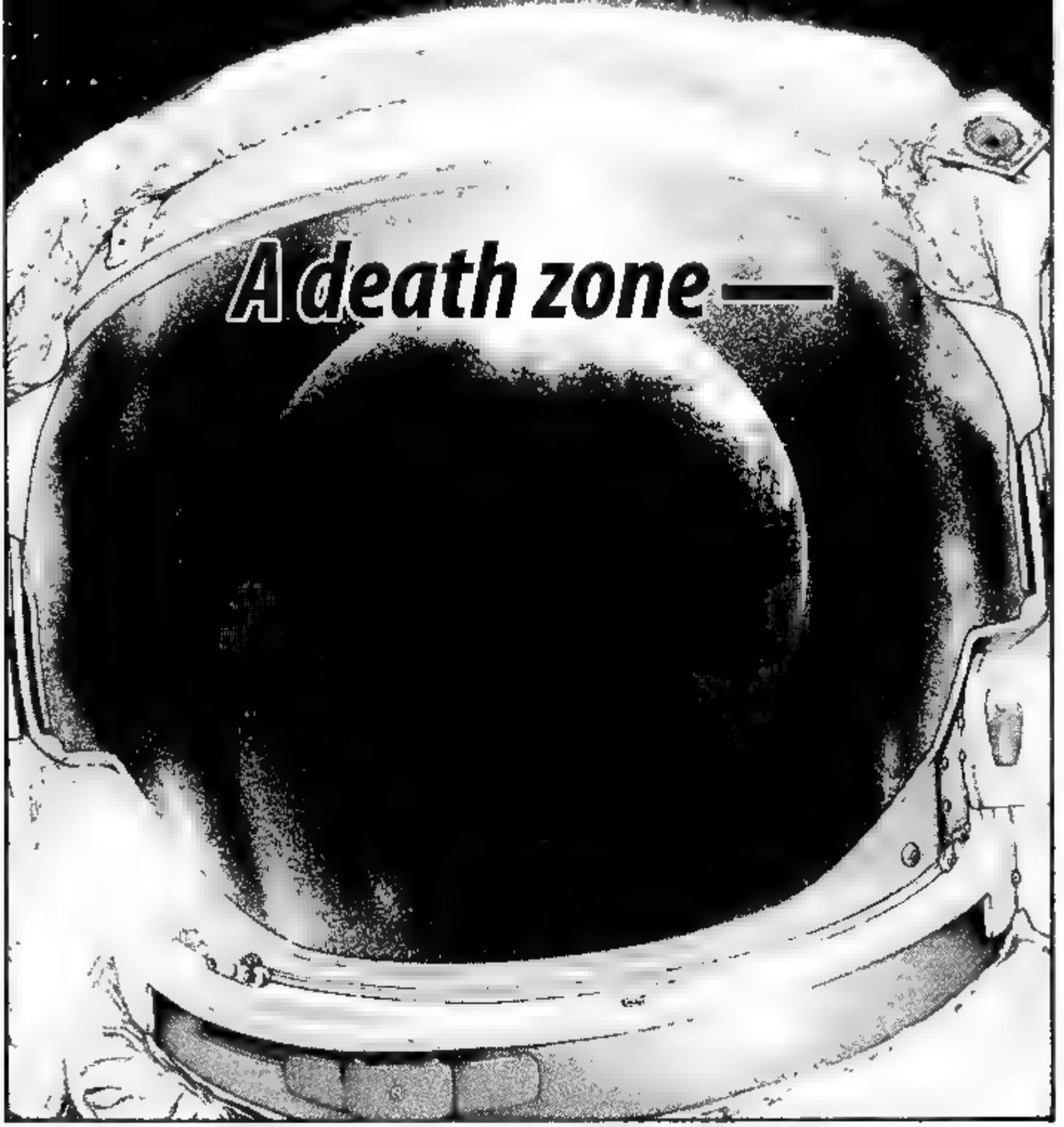

I'M PUSHING MY LIMITS JUST TO CLIMB. IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO CLIMB DOWN THIS ICE WALL WITHOUT A ROPE...
YOU'RE RIGHT, MIYA-MOTO...




GEHOH
GEHOH

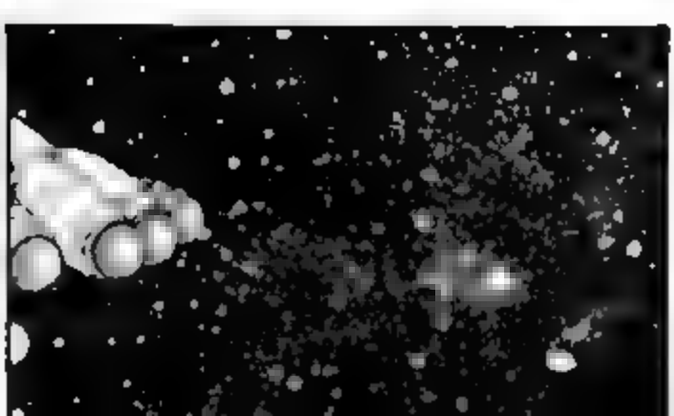





A death zone—

With no possibility of getting a new supply of oxygen, all I can do is meaning-lessly deplete what I have...
In this area, my body can't adapt to the high altitude.

I can no longer progress
nor go back



I'm
powerless.
I can't do
anything...

KOKOU NO HITO

by Authors: NABEDA Yoshiro and NITTA Jiro
by Artist: SAKAMOTO Shinichi

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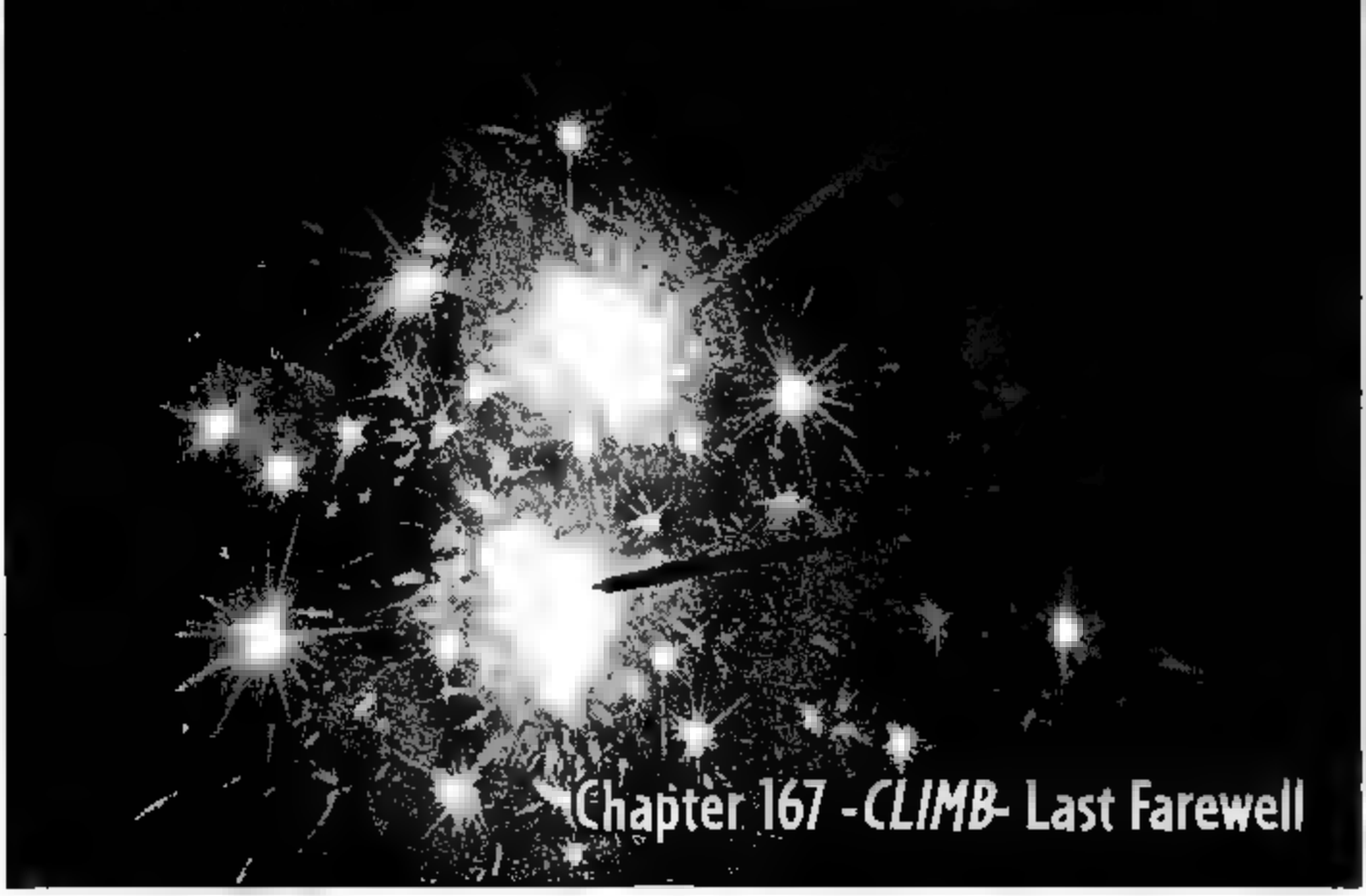
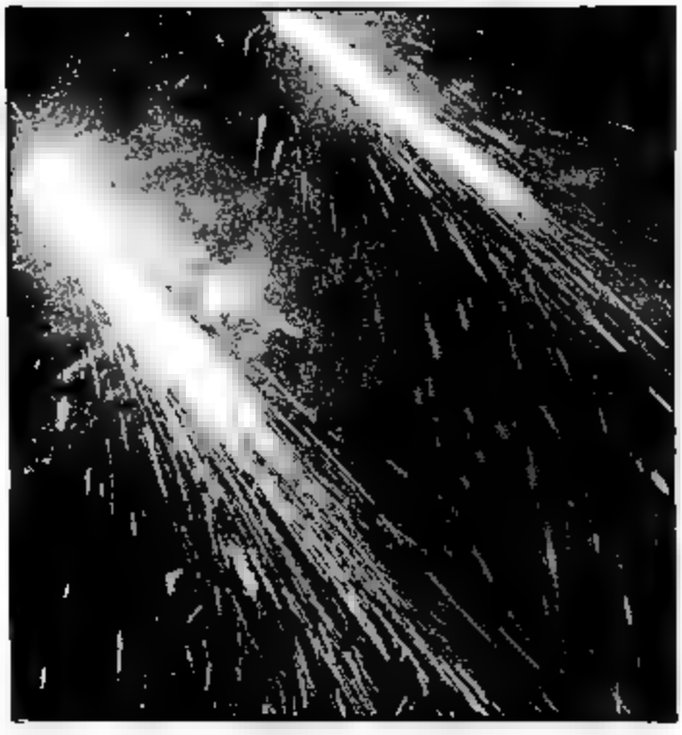
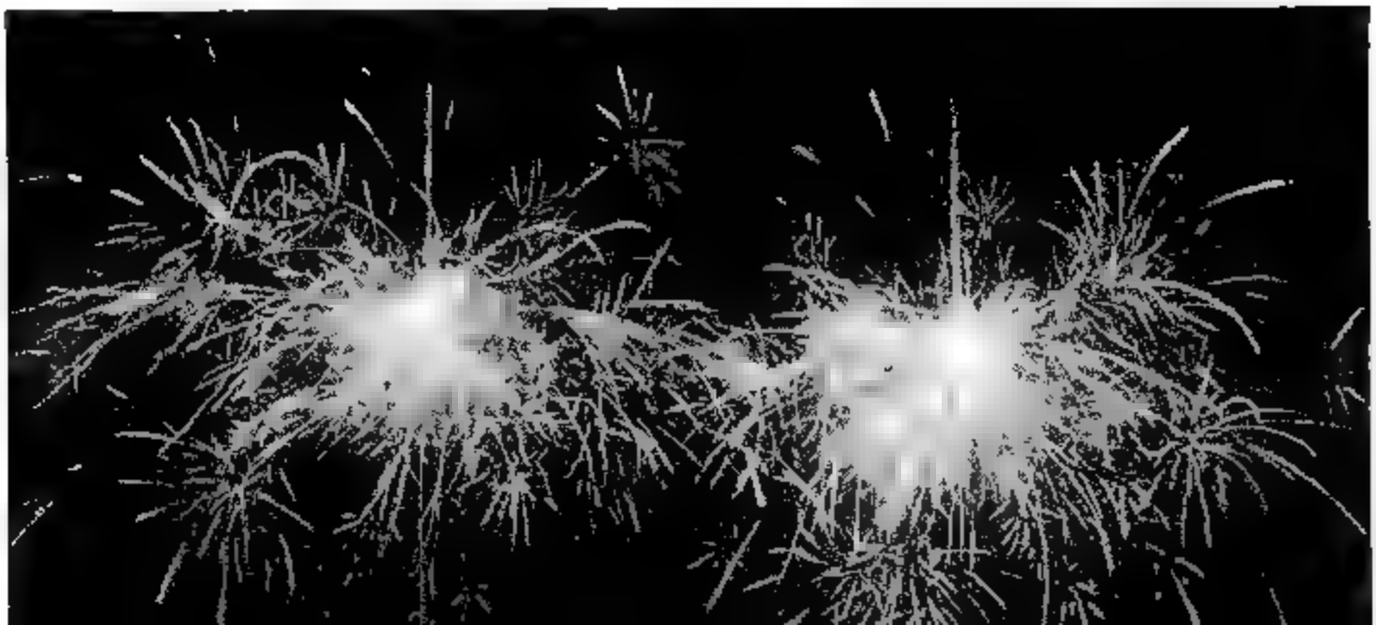
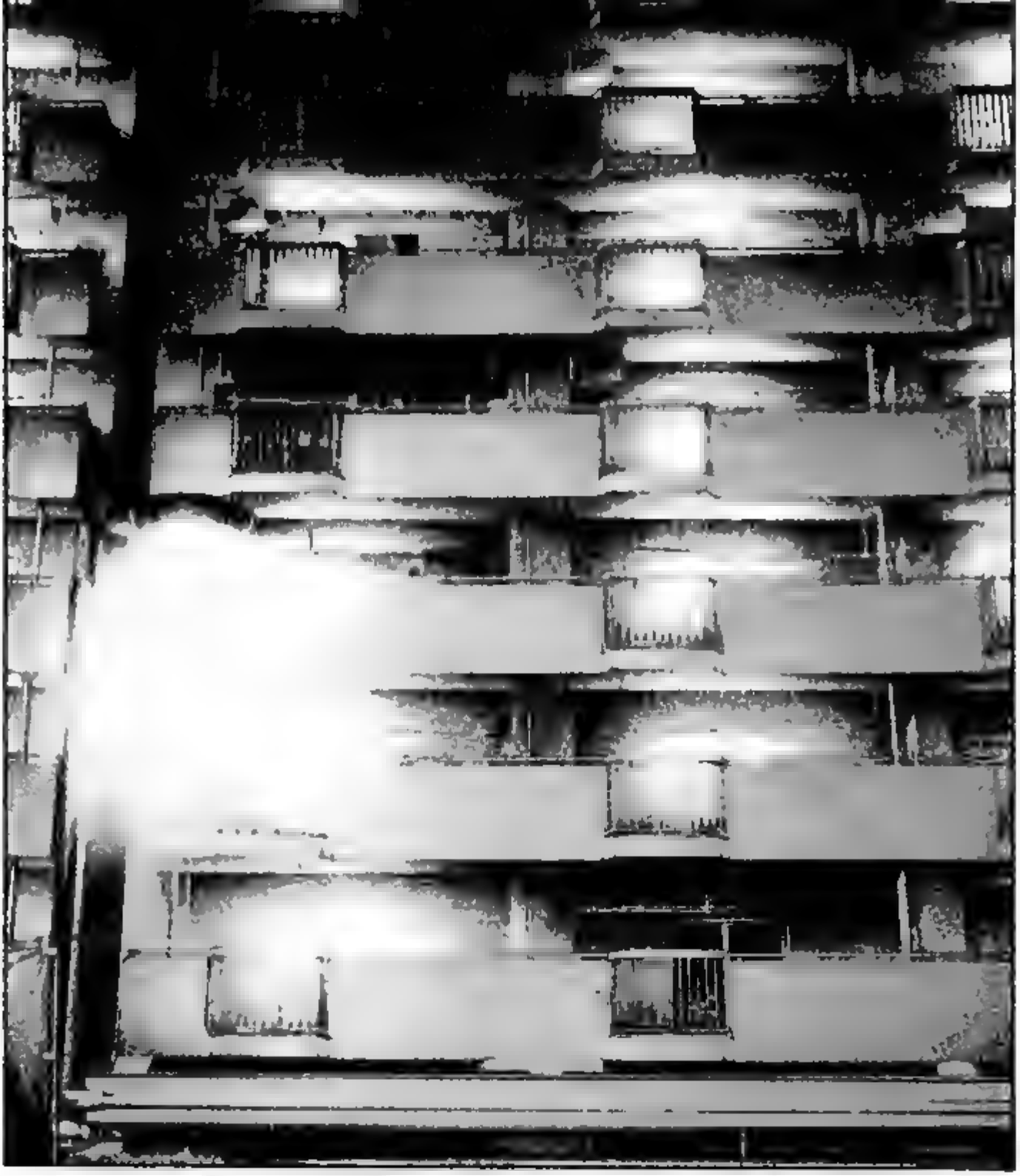
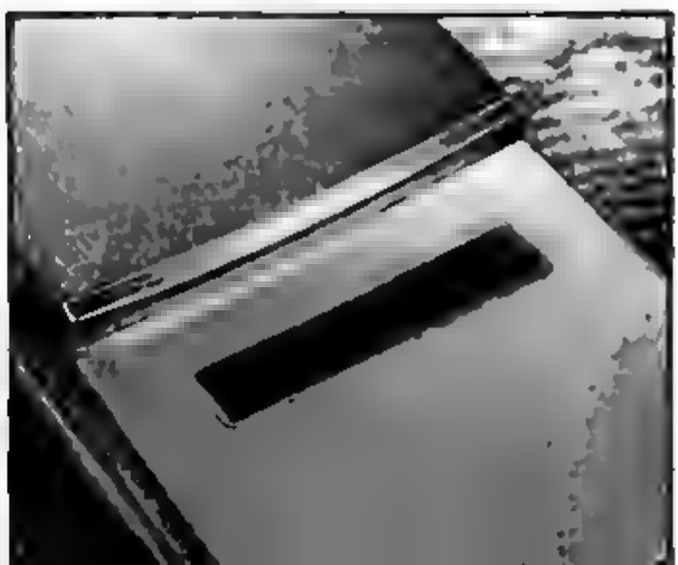

Chapter 167 -CLIMB- Last Farewell



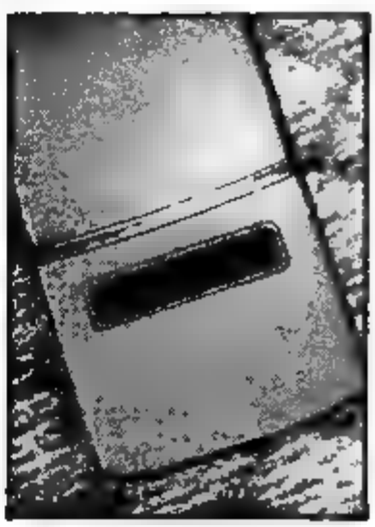






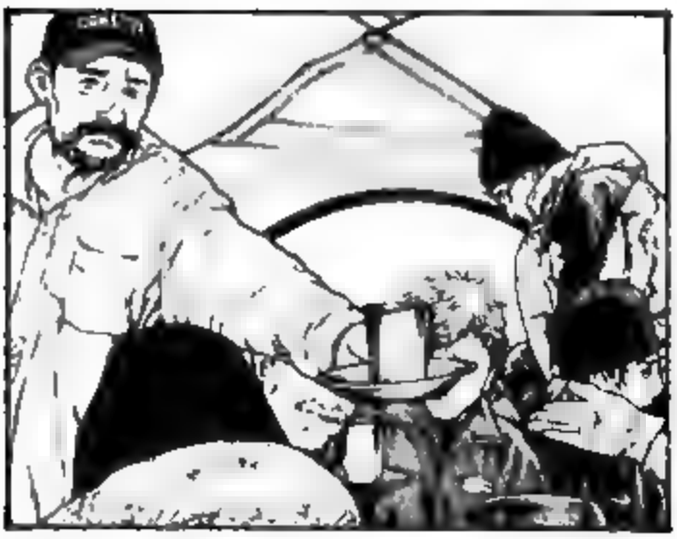
.....

Incoming call
Adachi-Sensei



WOULD YOU BE QUIET?!

July 23rd
4:22 PM
K2 South-Face
5100m site base camp
Air temperature -2°C



K2...
A MOUNTAIN AMONG MOUNTAINS.
THE MOST BEAUTIFUL AND DANGEROUS MOUNTAIN.

BECAUSE IT IS AN ISOLATED PEAK, IT HAS UNSTABLE WEATHER, STEEP SLOPES, AND FREQUENT AVALANCHES...

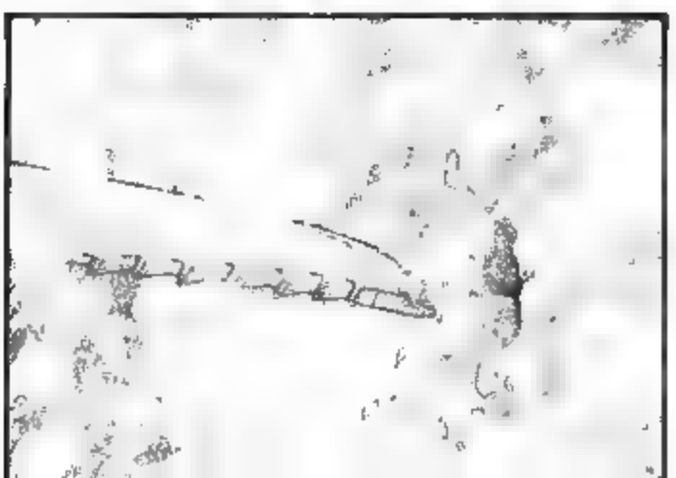
JUST HOW MANY THAT HAVE CHALLENGED THIS SAVAGE MOUNTAIN HAVE LOST THEIR LIVES...?

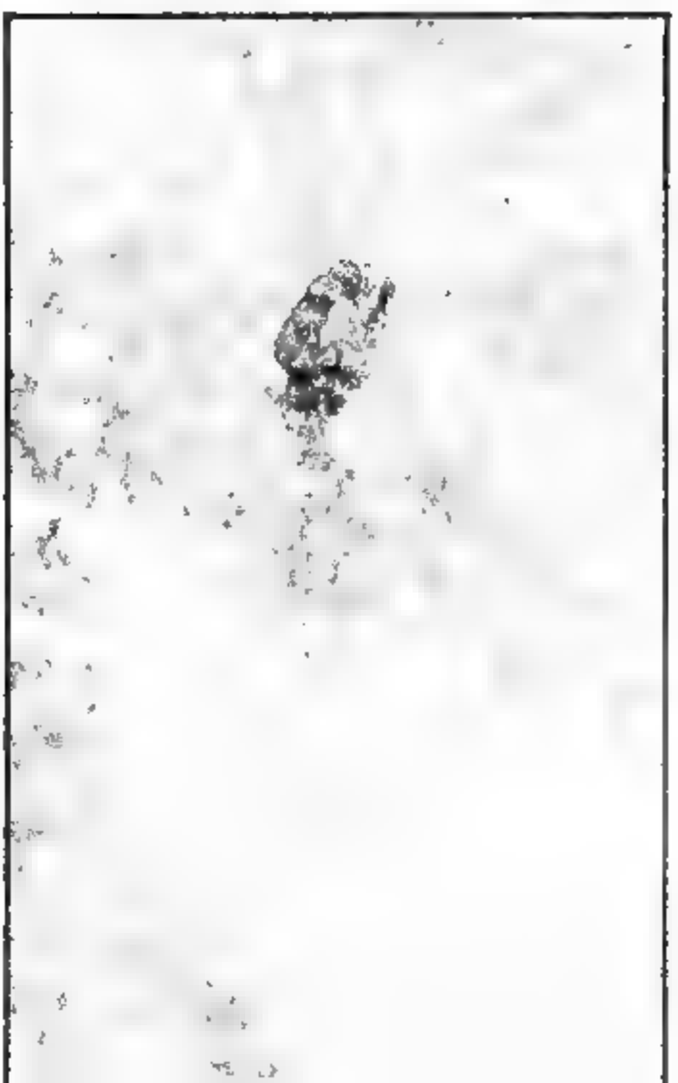
※ A MEMORIAL AT THE FOOT OF K2 AS A MEMORIAL TO FALLEN CLIMBERS.

IT WOULD SEEM THAT THE NAMES OF THE TWO BRAVE JAPANESE THAT TOOK ON THE EAST FACE

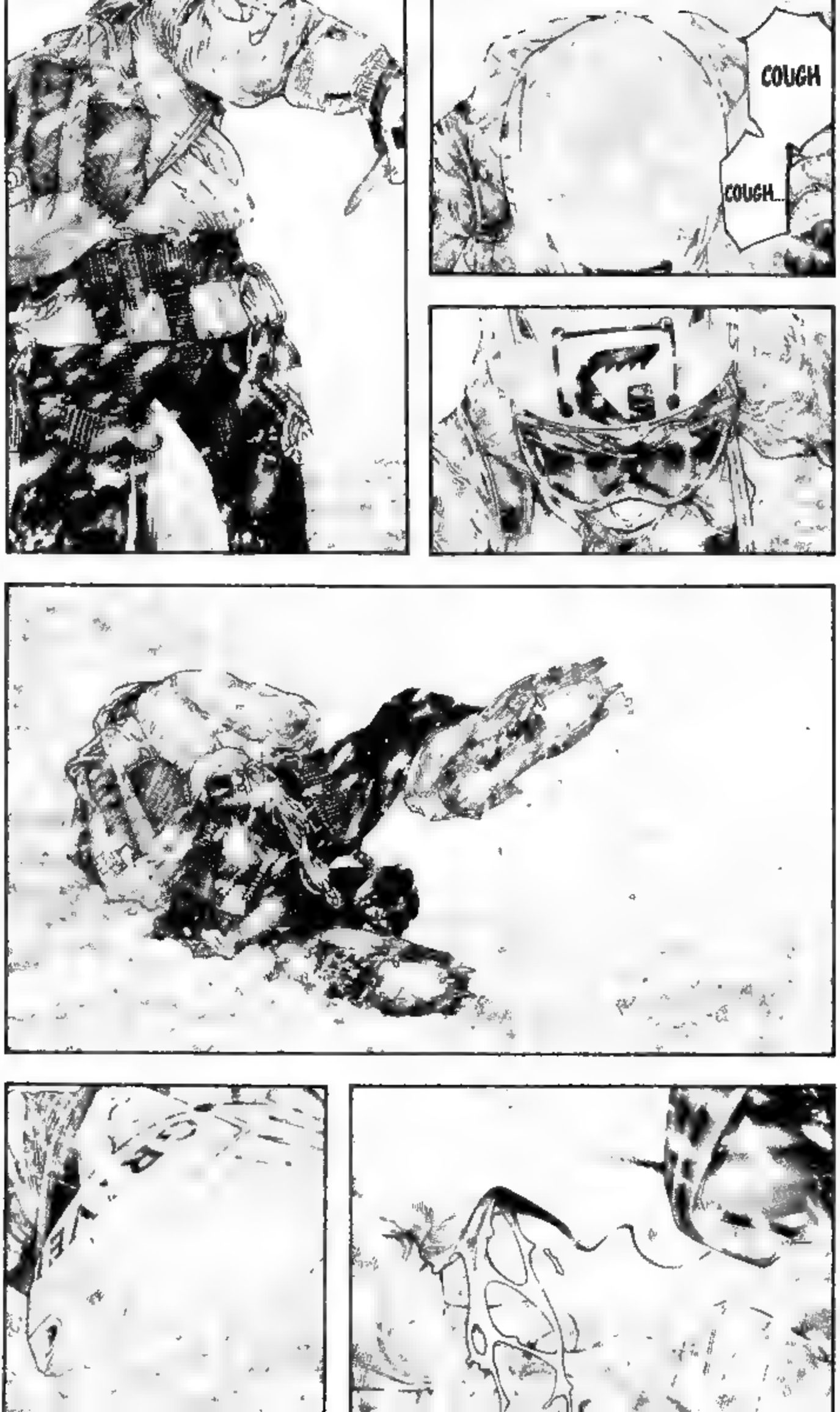
WILL BE ENGRAVED IN PLATES AS NEW EDITIONS TO THE *GILKEY MEMORIAL...

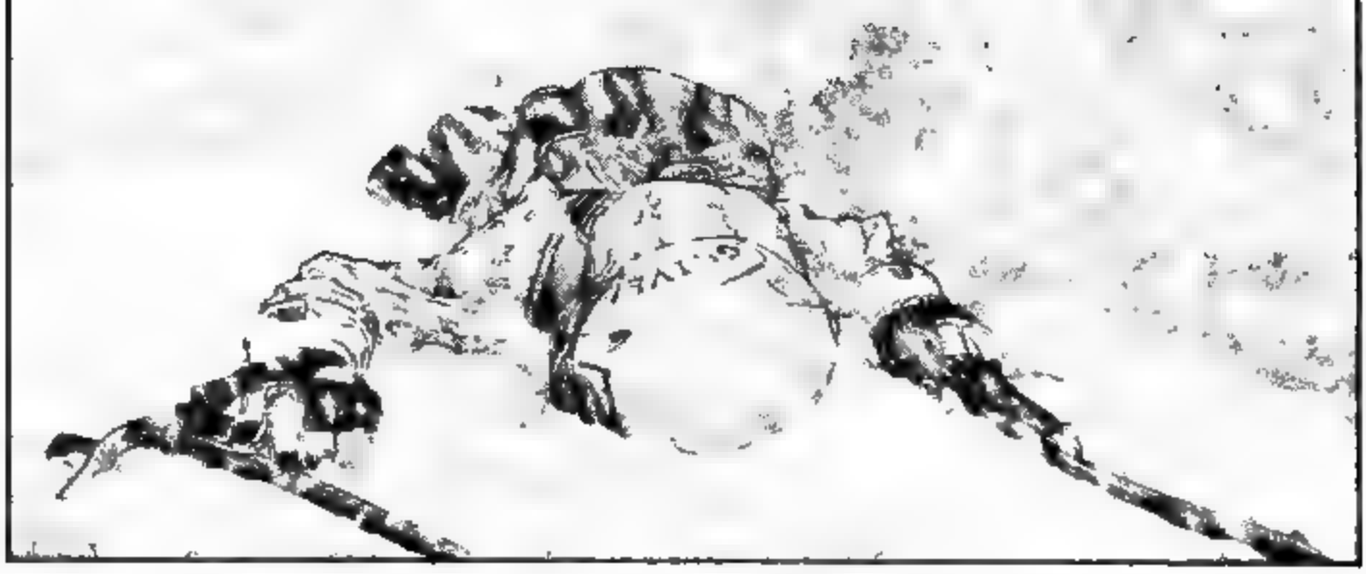
July 23rd
1:47 PM
K2 East-Face
Terrace Midway-Up
a Hanging Glacier
8200m Site
Air Temperature -26°C

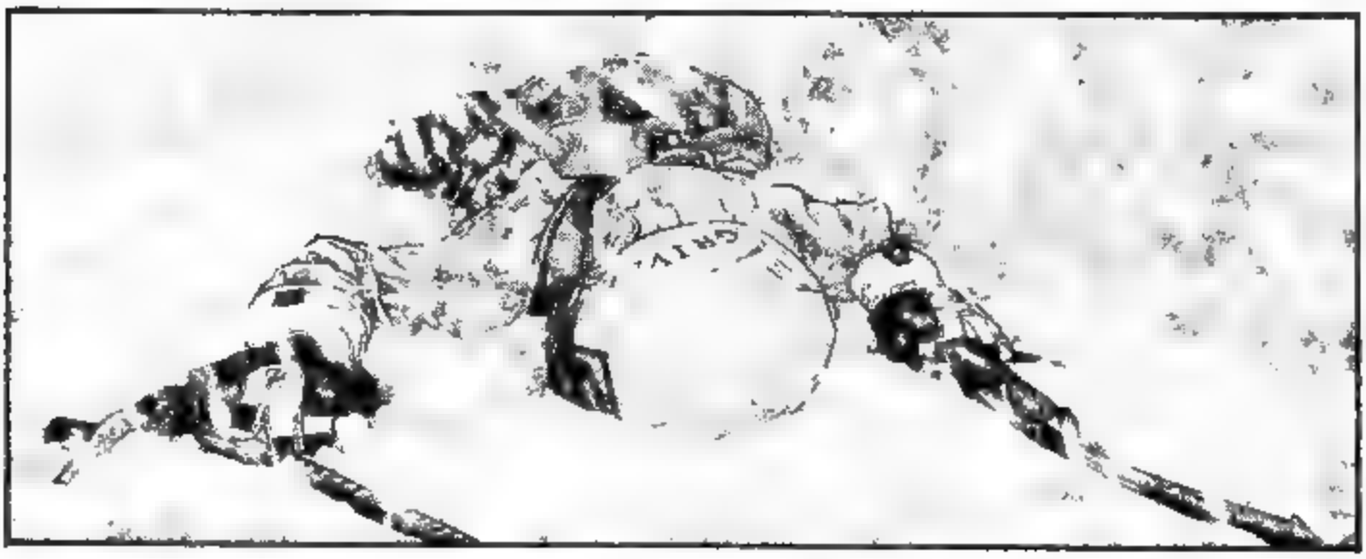


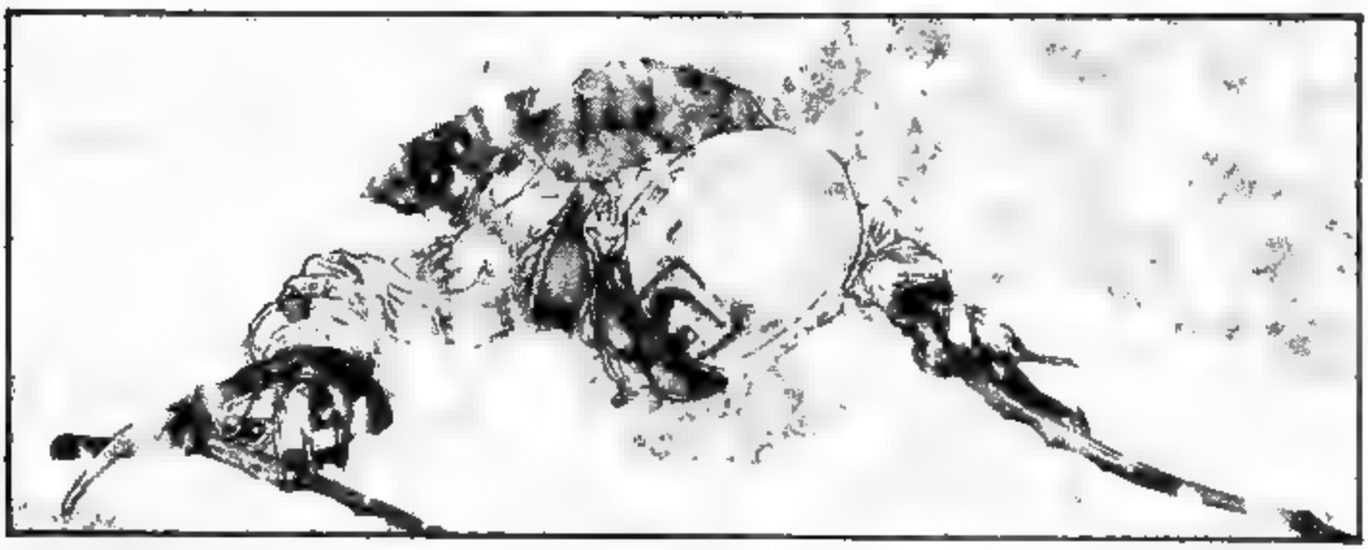


*MIRRORED: NEED AND SECURE


COUGH
COUGH...

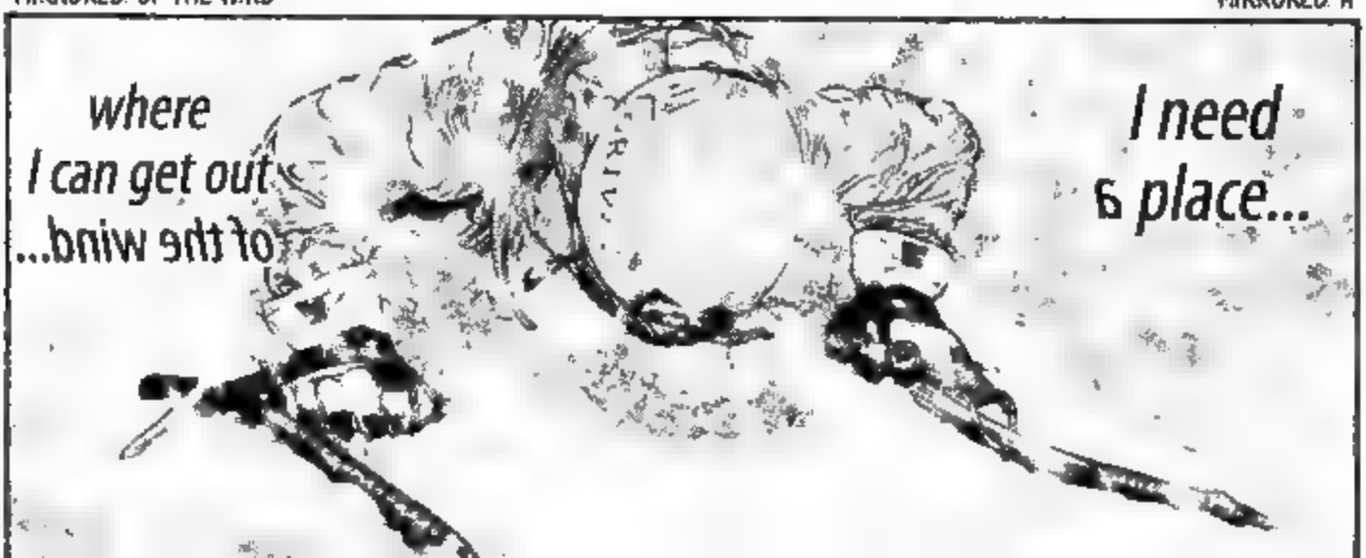






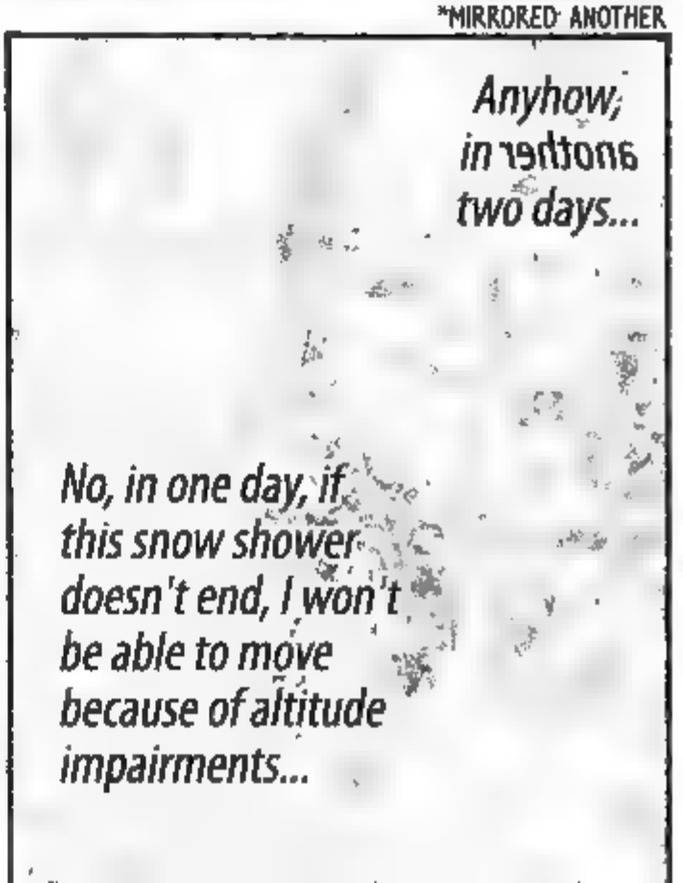
*MIRRORED: OF THE WIND

*MIRRORED: A

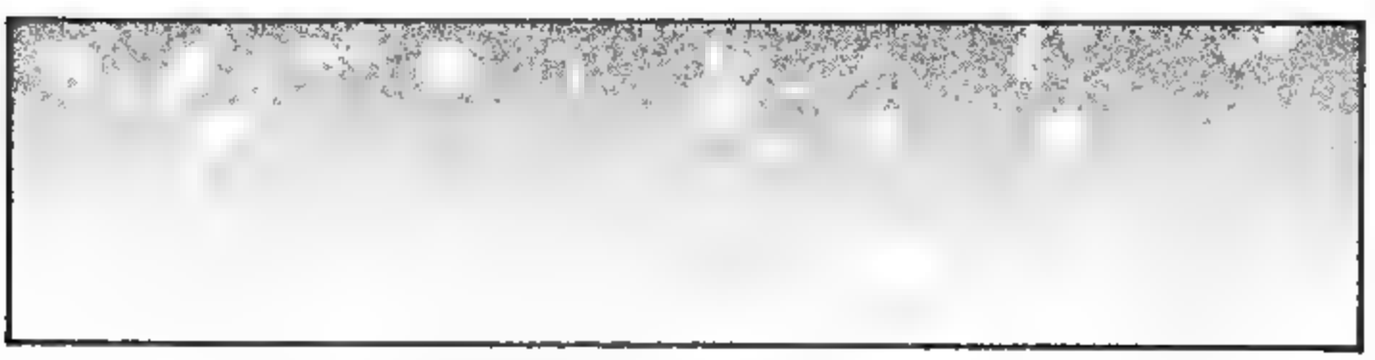


*MIRRORED: NO REASON

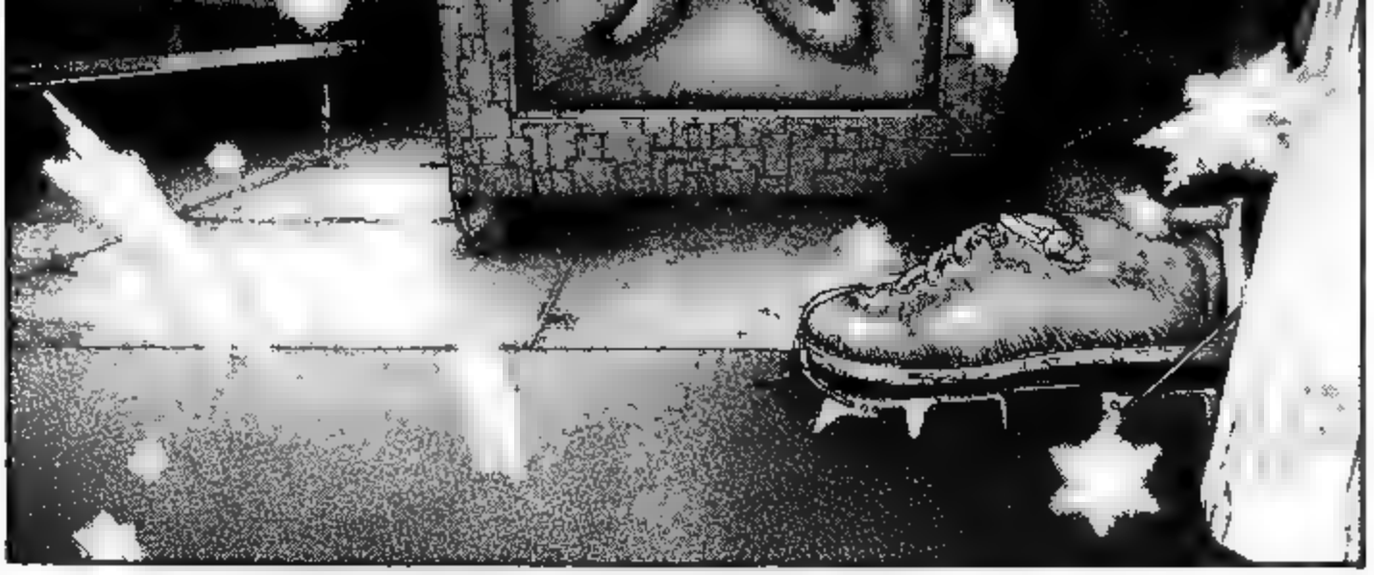
*MIRRORED: ANOTHER

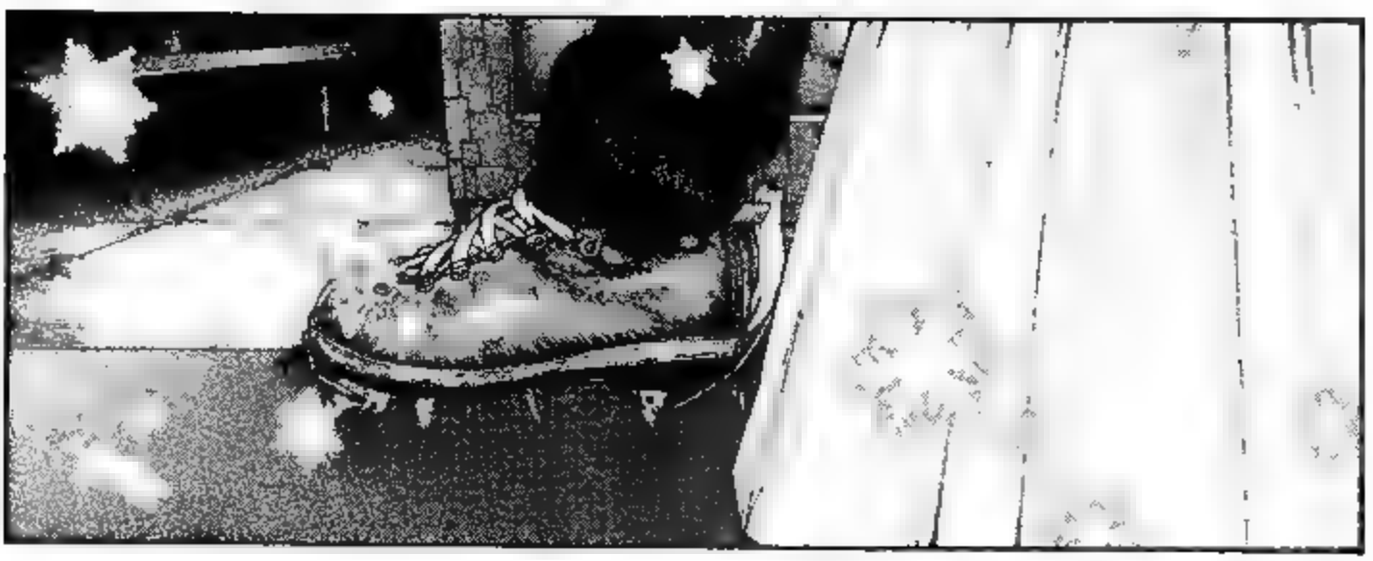

Anyhow, in another two days...
No, in one day, if this snow shower doesn't end, I won't be able to move because of altitude impairments...

I'm tired...
I've never been
this tired before.

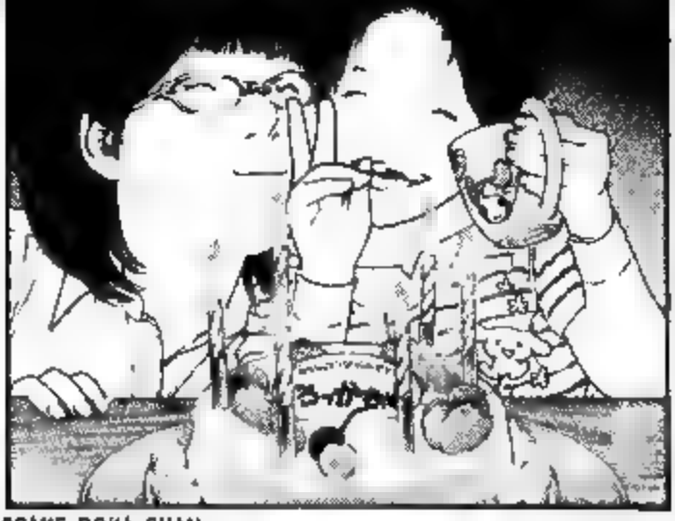


DAD,
C'MON, LET'S GO.
That's right. Today's Rokka's wedding...
GRI
Y- YEAH...

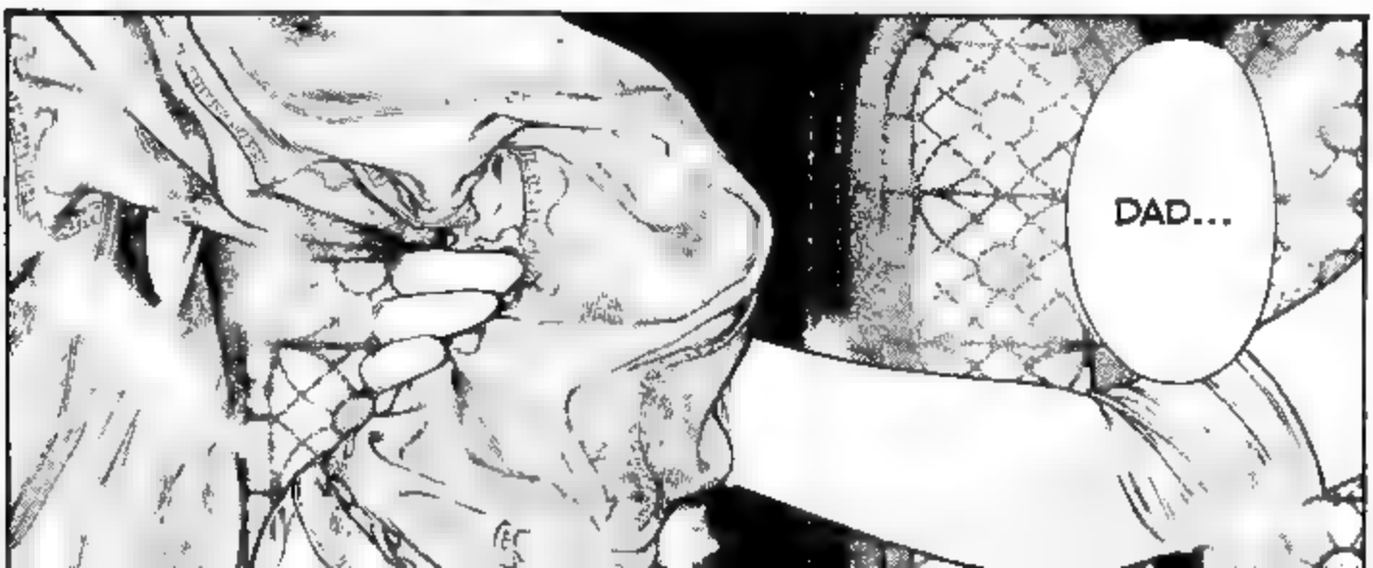




You sure got big...

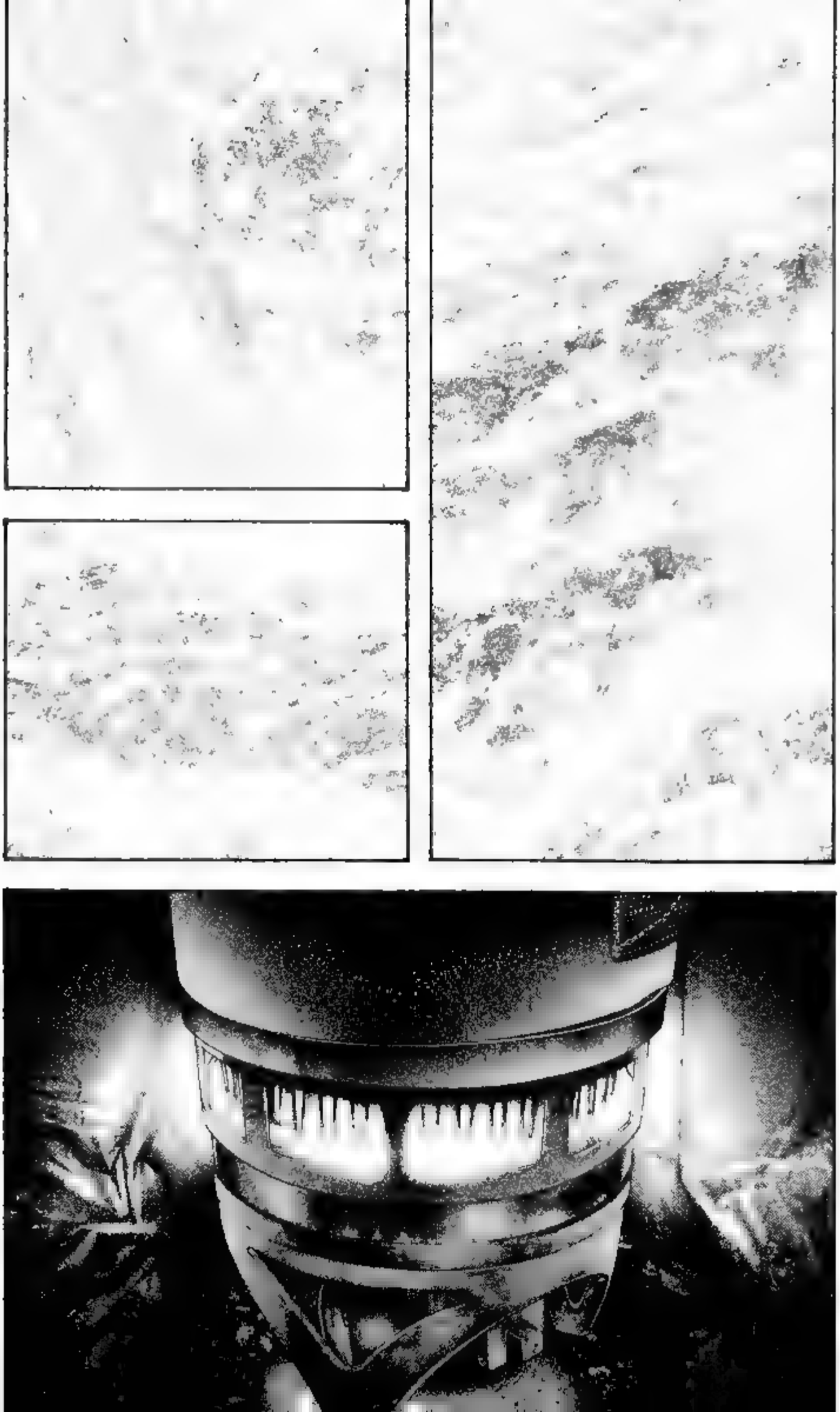


*CAKE ROKA-CHAN



WHY DID YOU LEAVE US ALONE...
TO GO TO A MOUNTAIN COVERED WITH COLD SNOW LIKE THIS?

Sorry...



KOKOU NO HITO

by Authors: NABEDA Yoshiro and NITTA Jiro
by Artist: SAKAMOTO Shinichi

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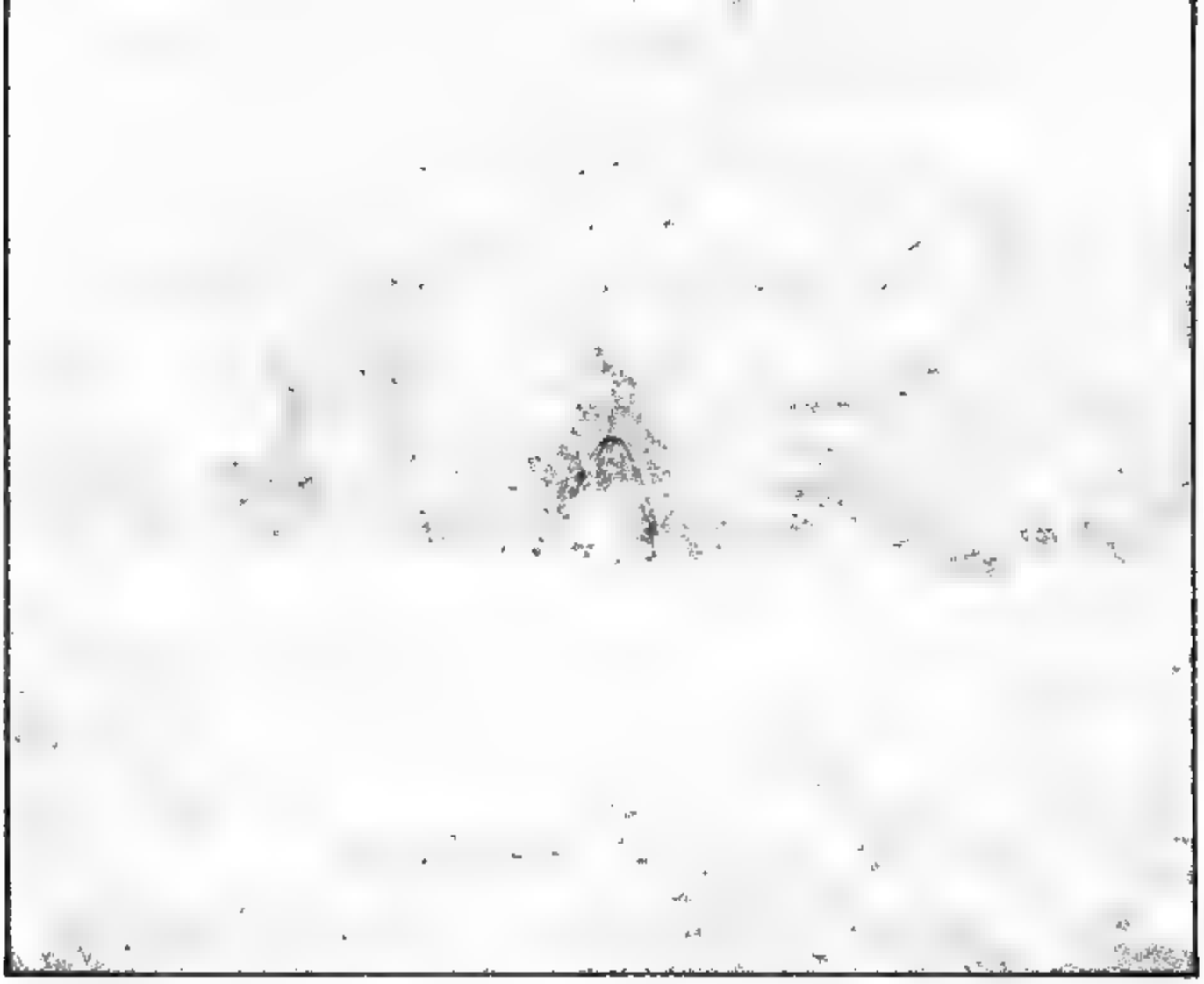
August 1973.
Japan's 2nd RCC team's expedition to Everest officially named the "Japan Everest Southwest-Face Climbing Team"

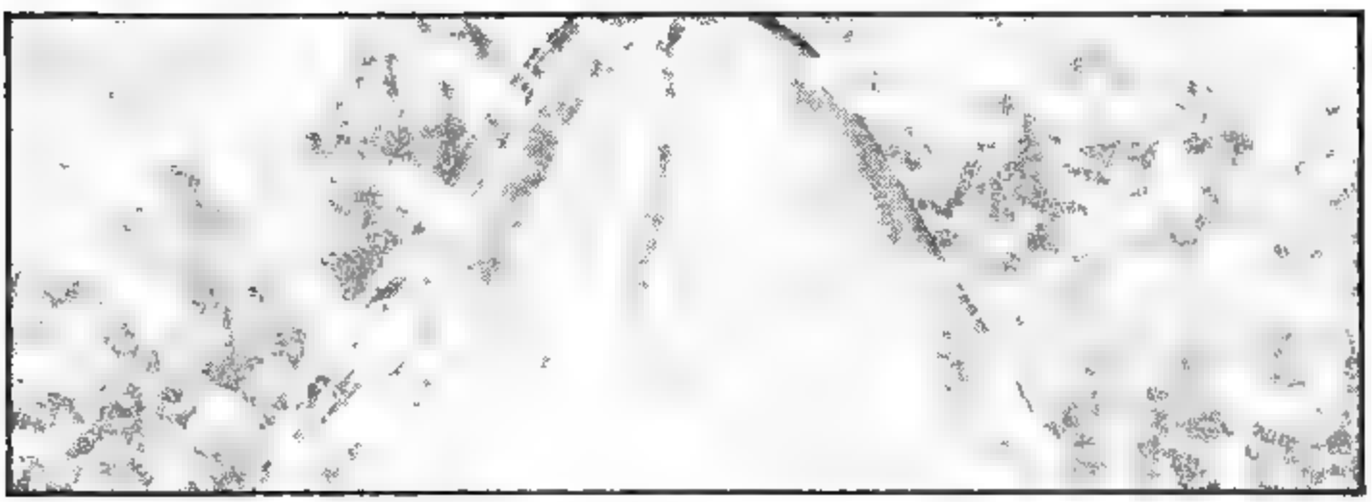
was formed with an Aichi Acadamy assistant professor Yuasa Michio as the climbing captain and Morita Masaru and Hasekawa Tsuneo and others as members.

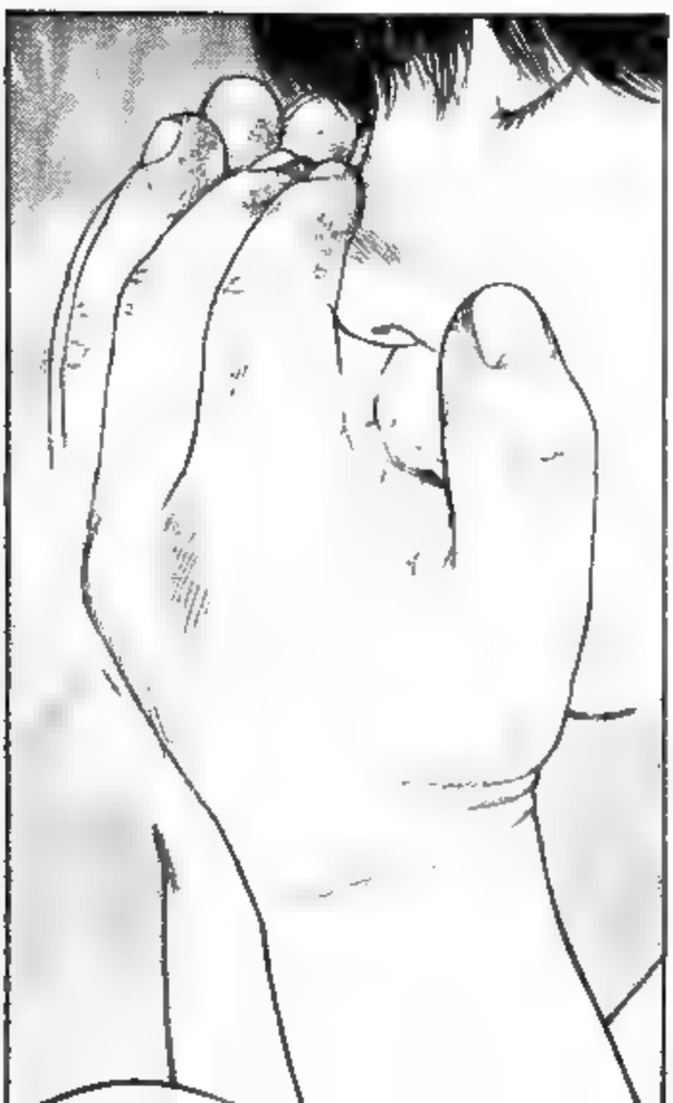
They left base camp, passed through an icefall, made their first camp C1, and constructed a temporary camp "Temporary C2" at Western Cwm, 6500 meters up.

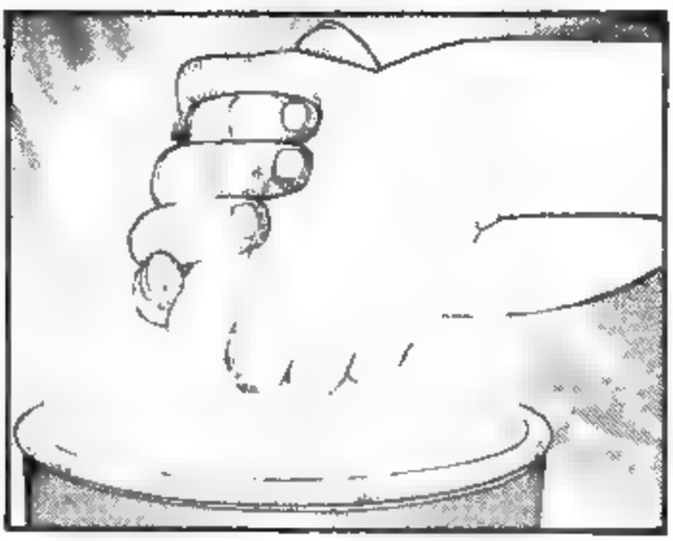
Later, they took the triple-crown achievement of Everest in Sprint, Fall, and Winter But in his younger days, Katou Yasuo saw a wondrous spectacle

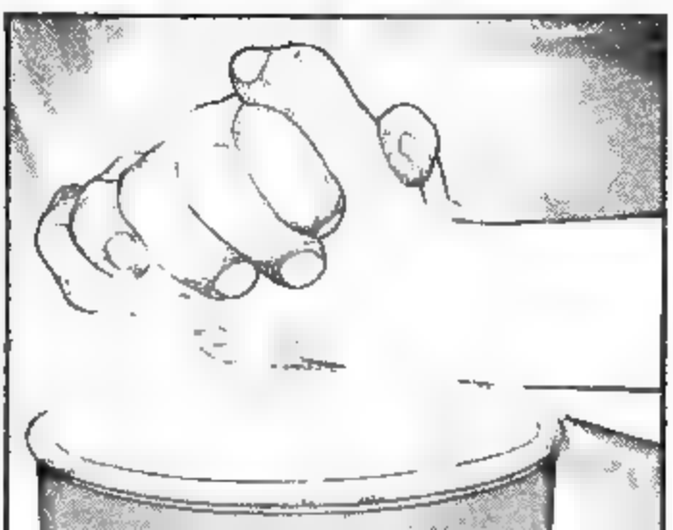
"YUKIKEMURI WO MEZASHITE" KATOU YASUO



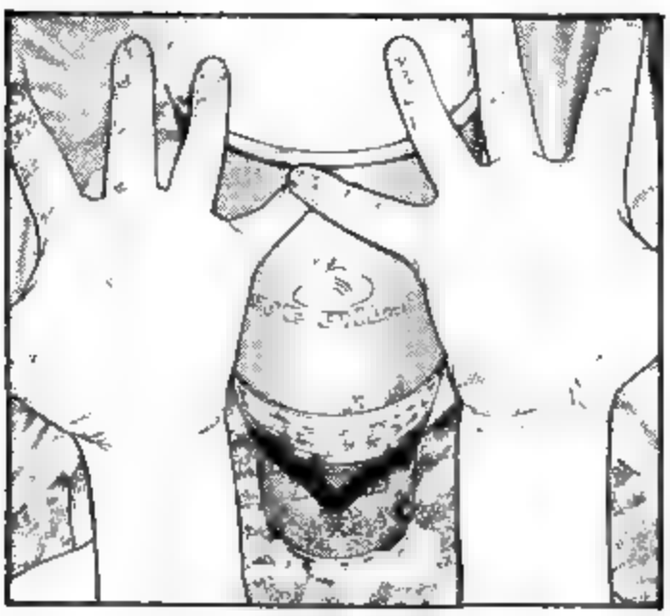


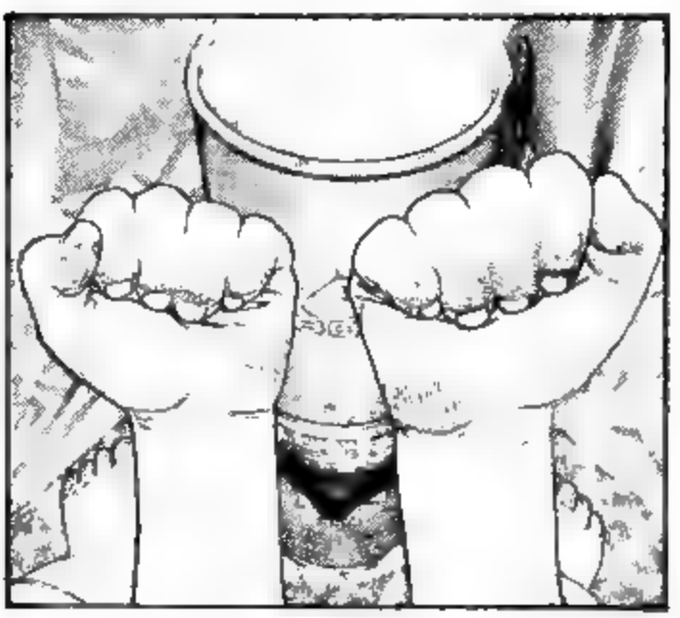


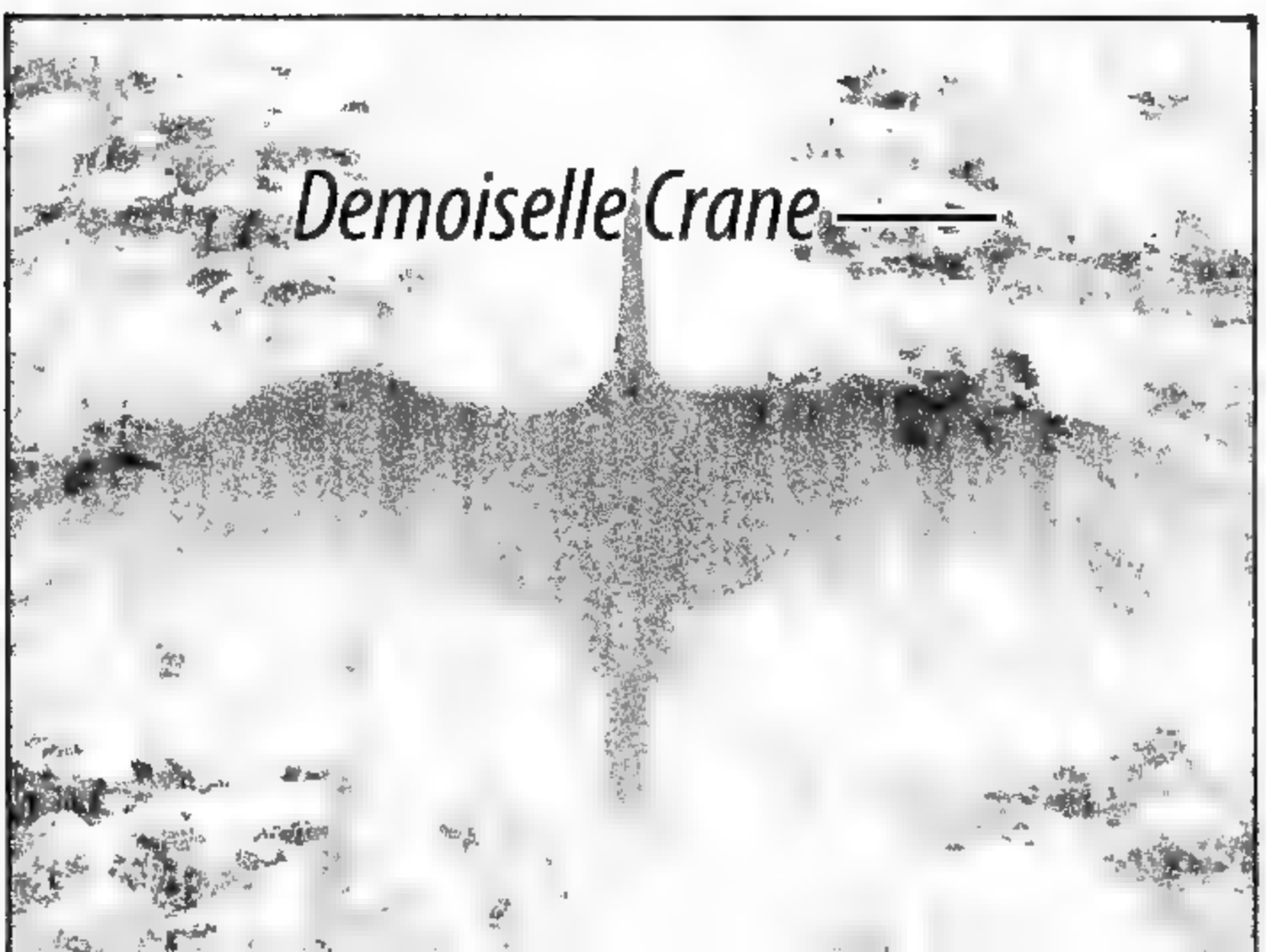




JETBOIL
July 23rd
3:17 PM
K2 East-Face
Terrace Part-Way up
the Hanging Glacier
Air Temperature -26 ℃



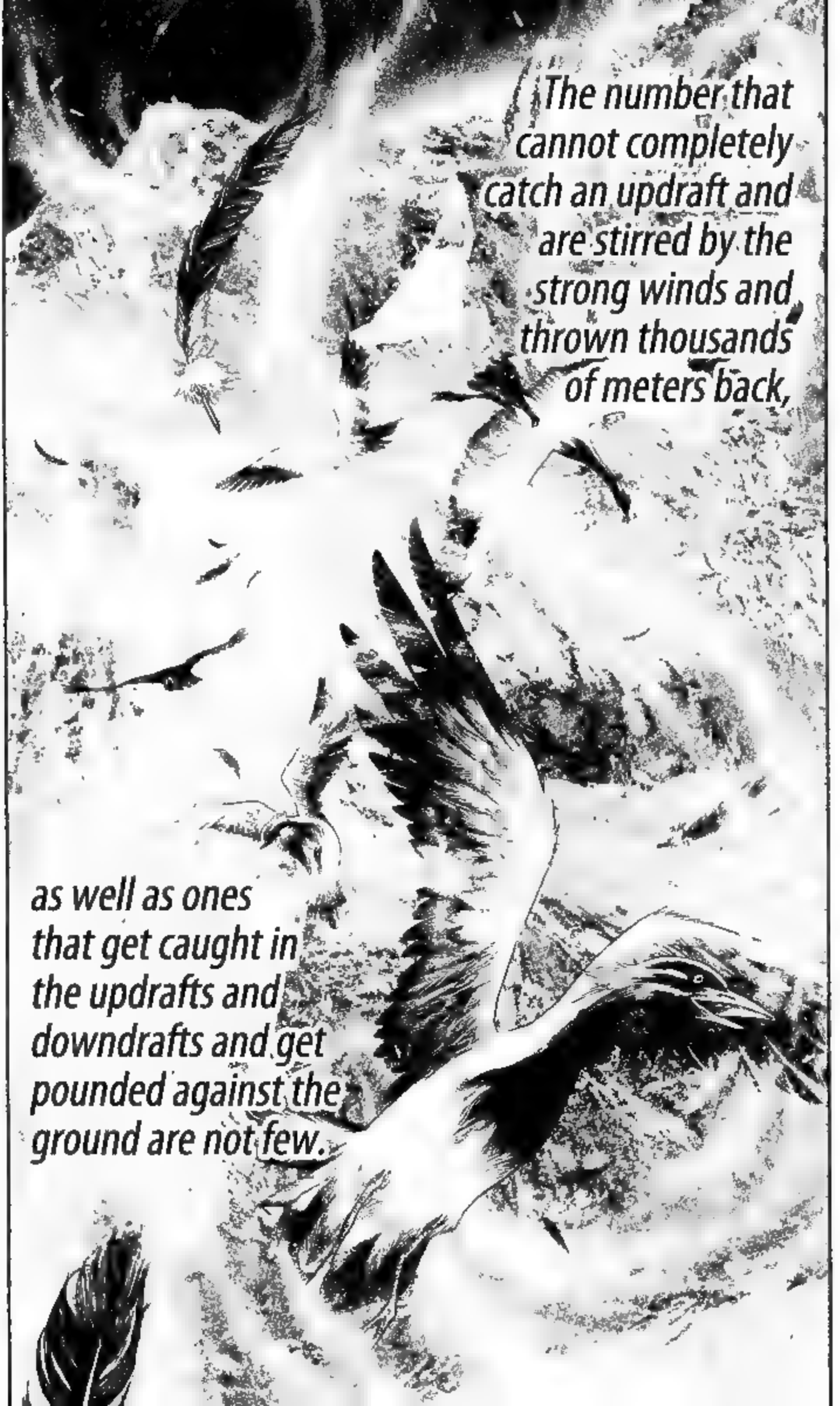



Demoiselle Crane

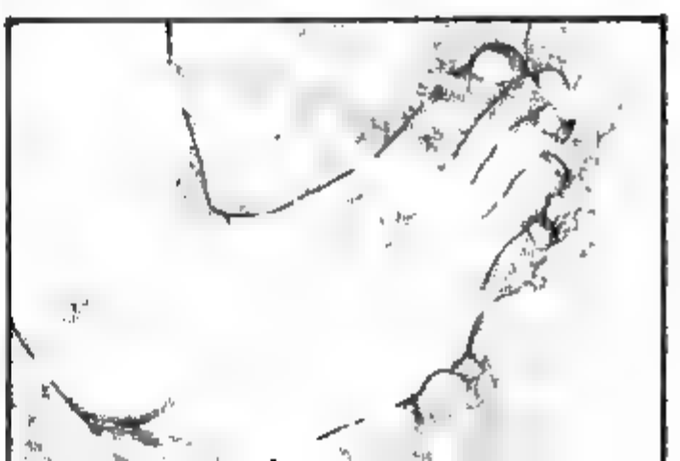
are known to cross over the 8000 meter Himalayan Mountains, crossing from the Mongolia/China side to India, in order to breed.
With a wingspan of less than 1 meter, this crane species, the smallest species of cranes in the world,

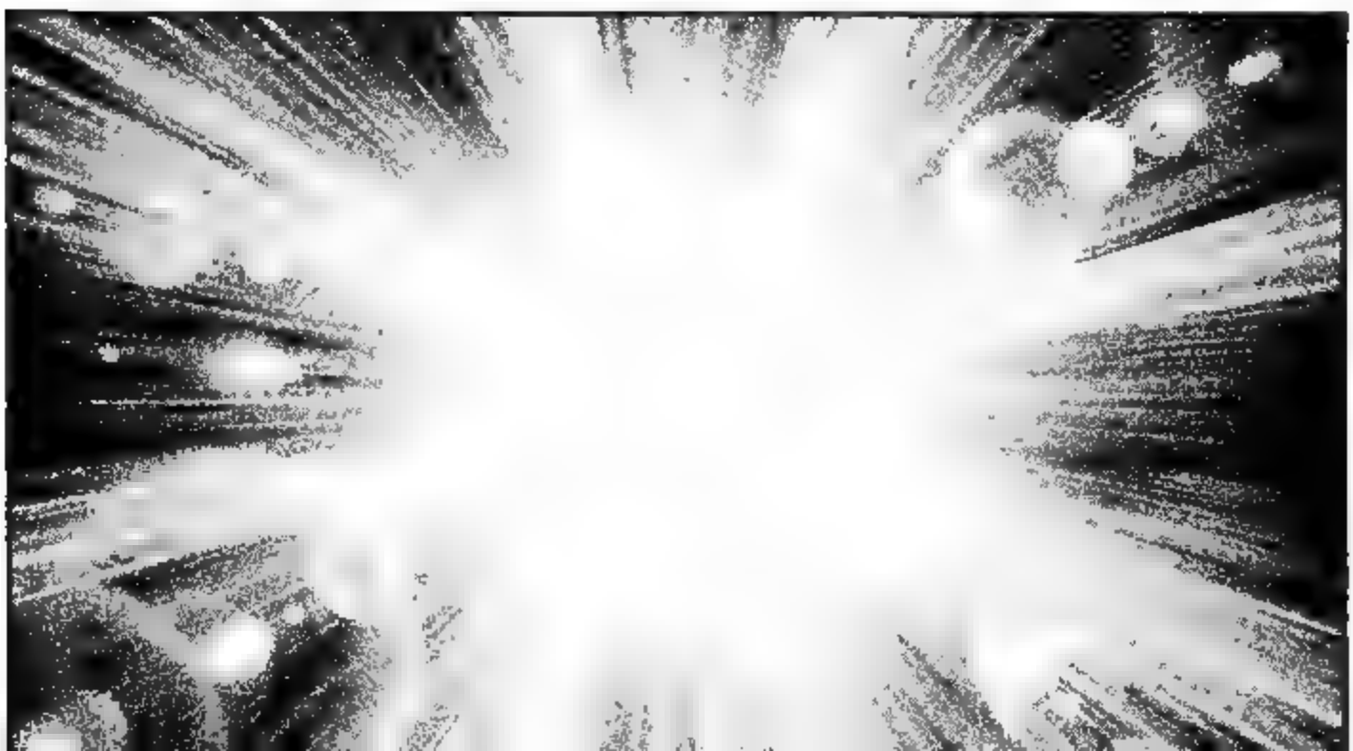
With the low oxygen and -40 ℃ temperatures,

it is almost impossible for any creatures to exist.

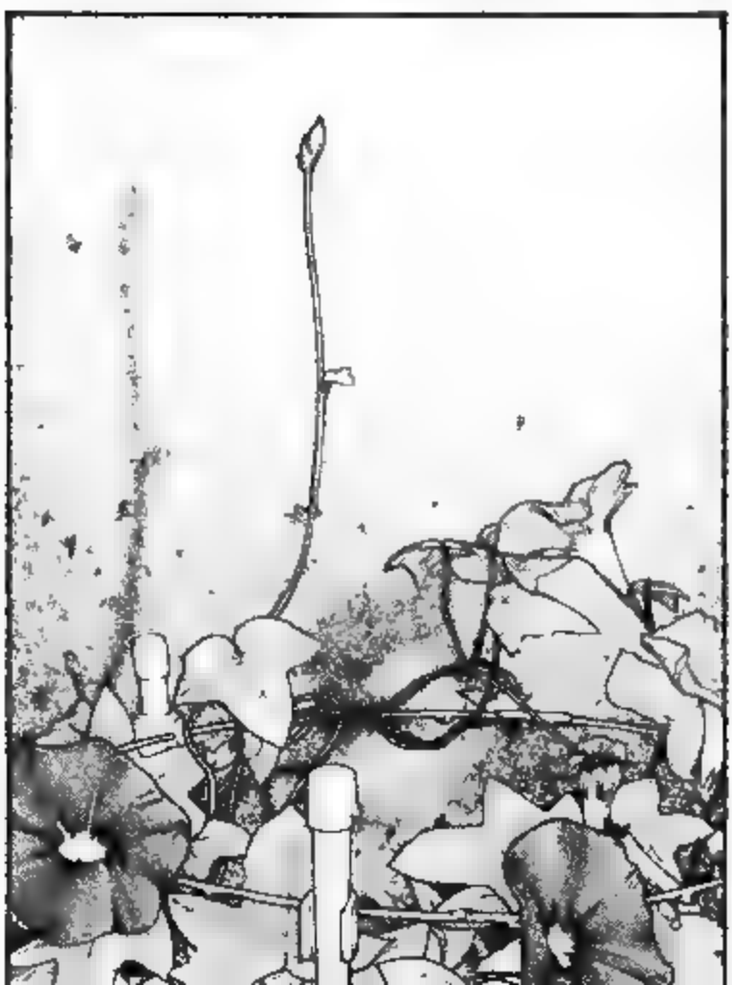

The number that cannot completely catch an updraft and are stirred by the strong winds and thrown thousands of meters back,
as well as ones that get caught in the updrafts and downdrafts and get pounded against the ground are not few.

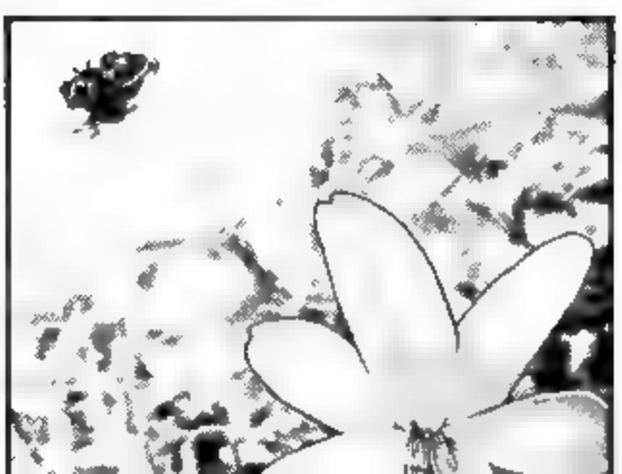
The birds have no consciousness—

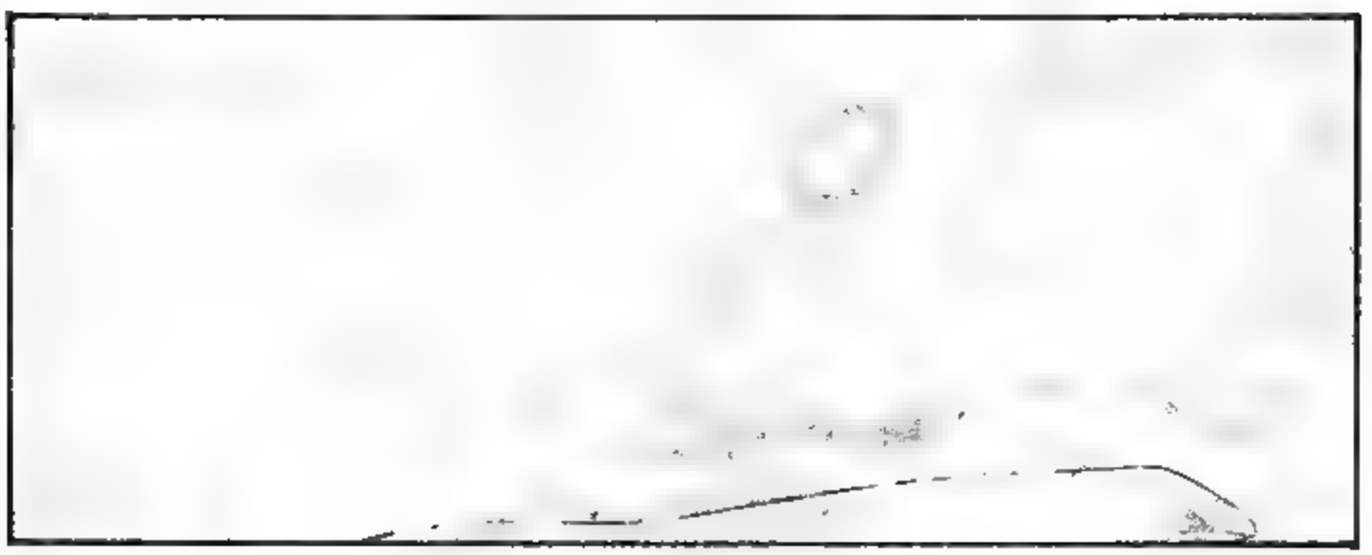


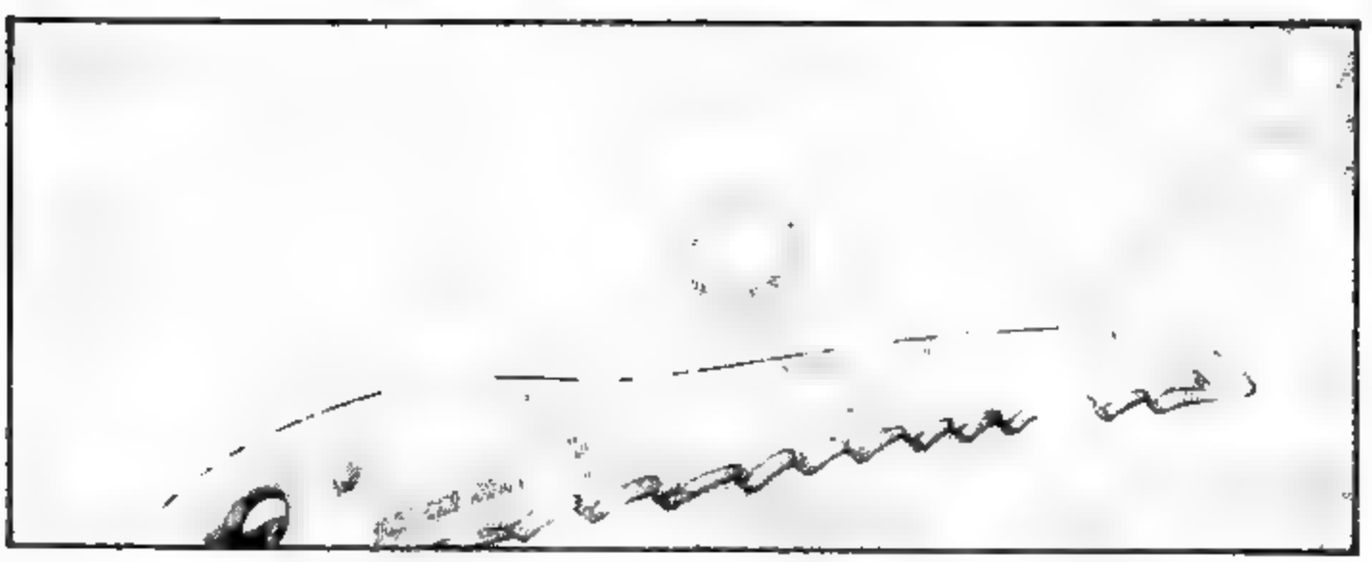


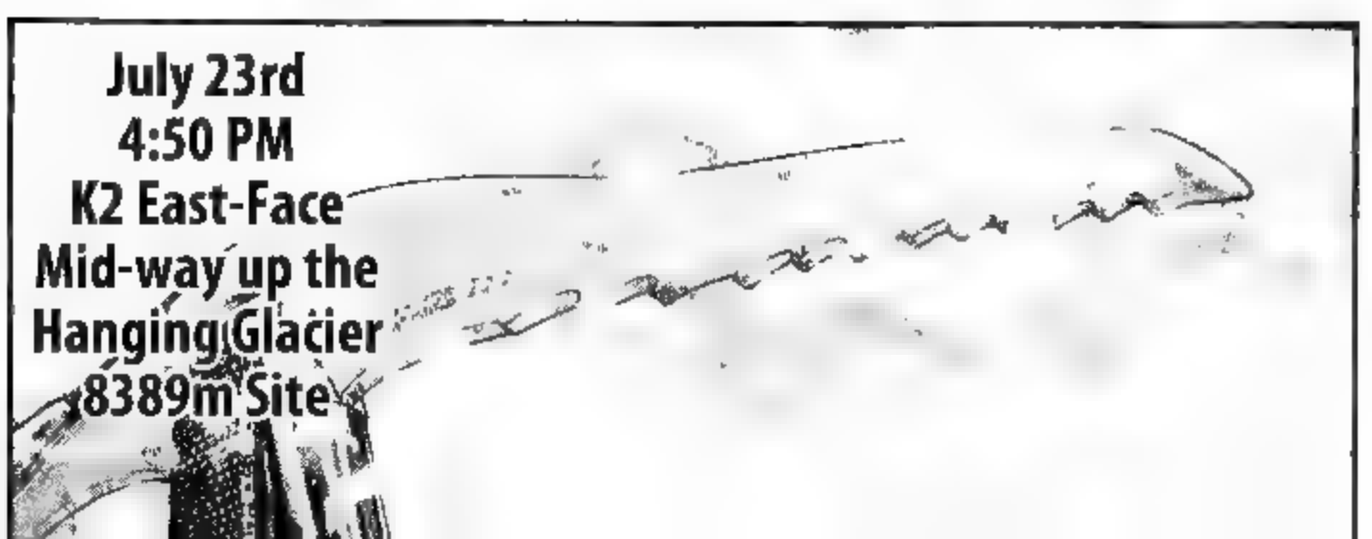
and-aim
upwards.
They simply
follow their
instincts...

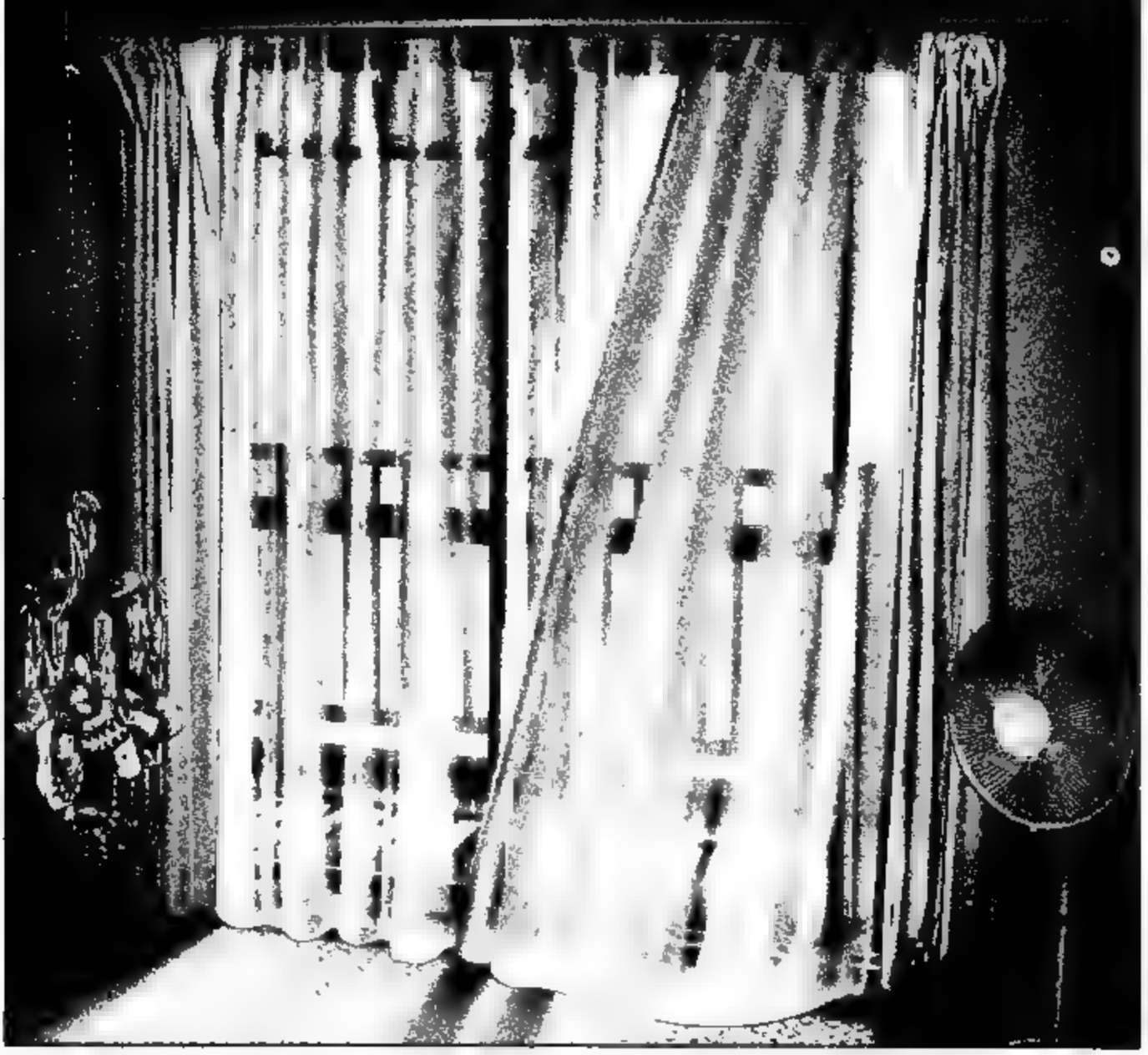


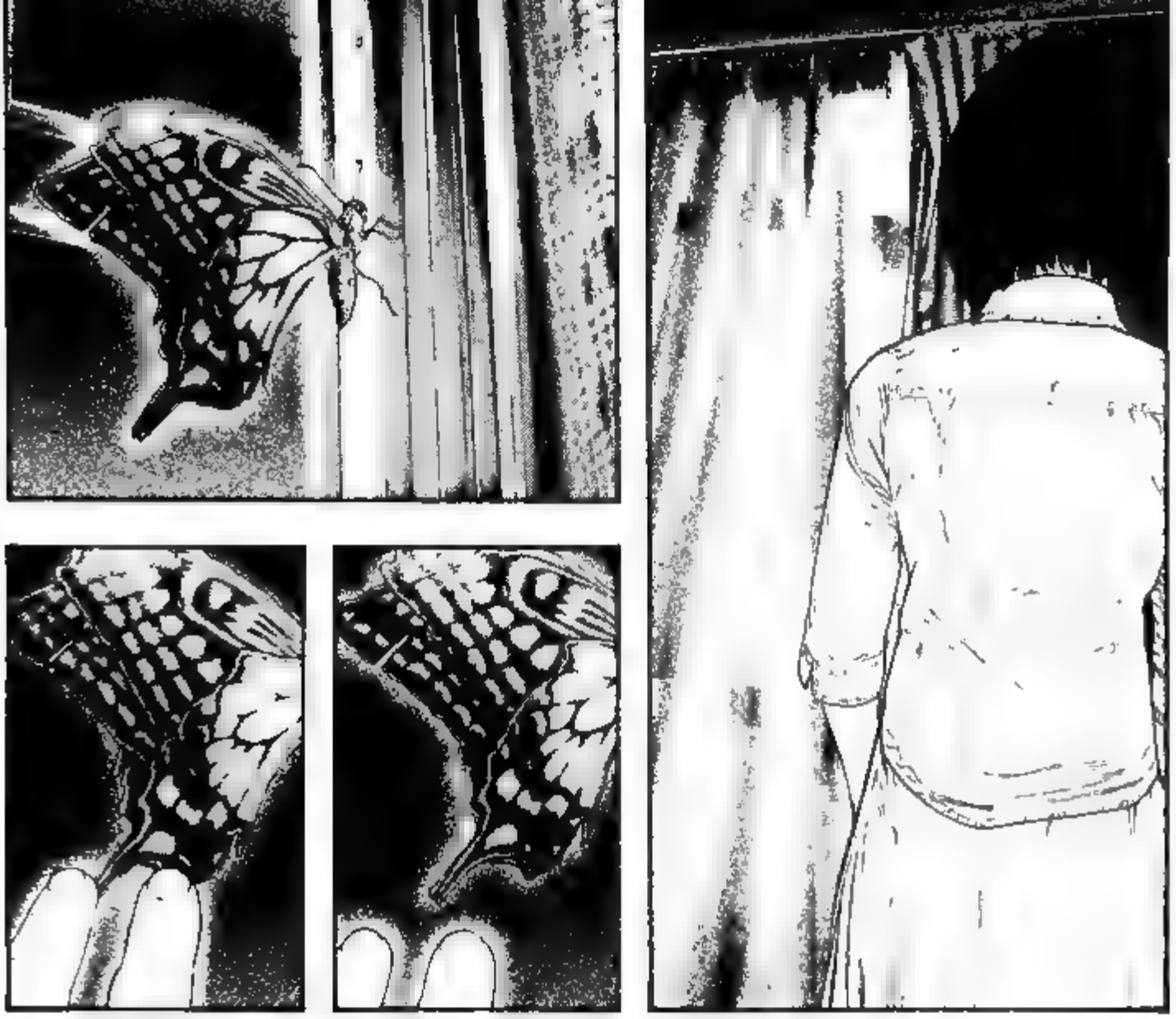


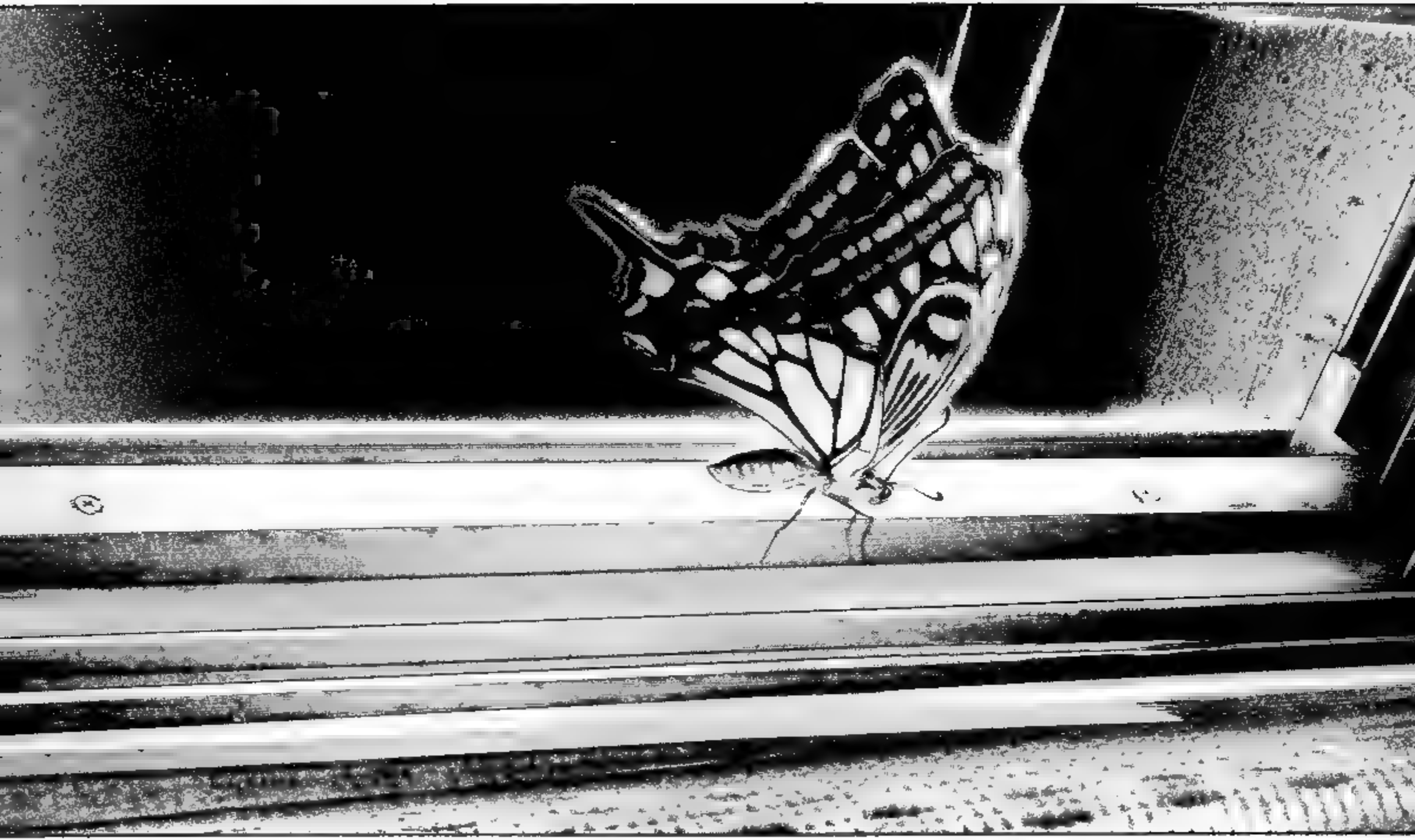





July 23rd
4:50 PM
K2 East-Face
Mid-way up the
Hanging Glacier
8389m Site







KOKOU NO HITO

by Authors: NABEDA Yoshiro and NITTA Jiro
by Artist: SAKAMOTO Shinichi

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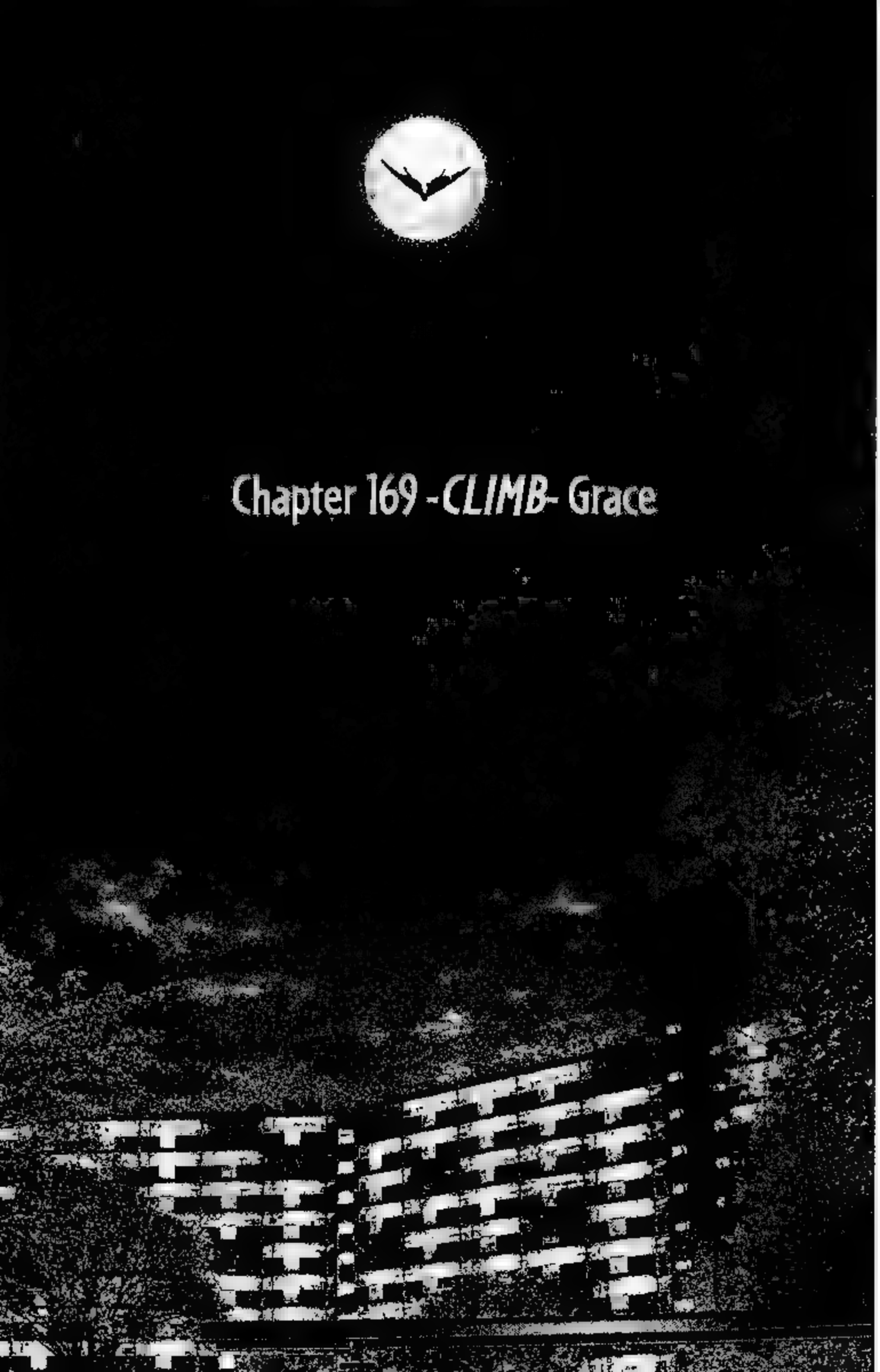
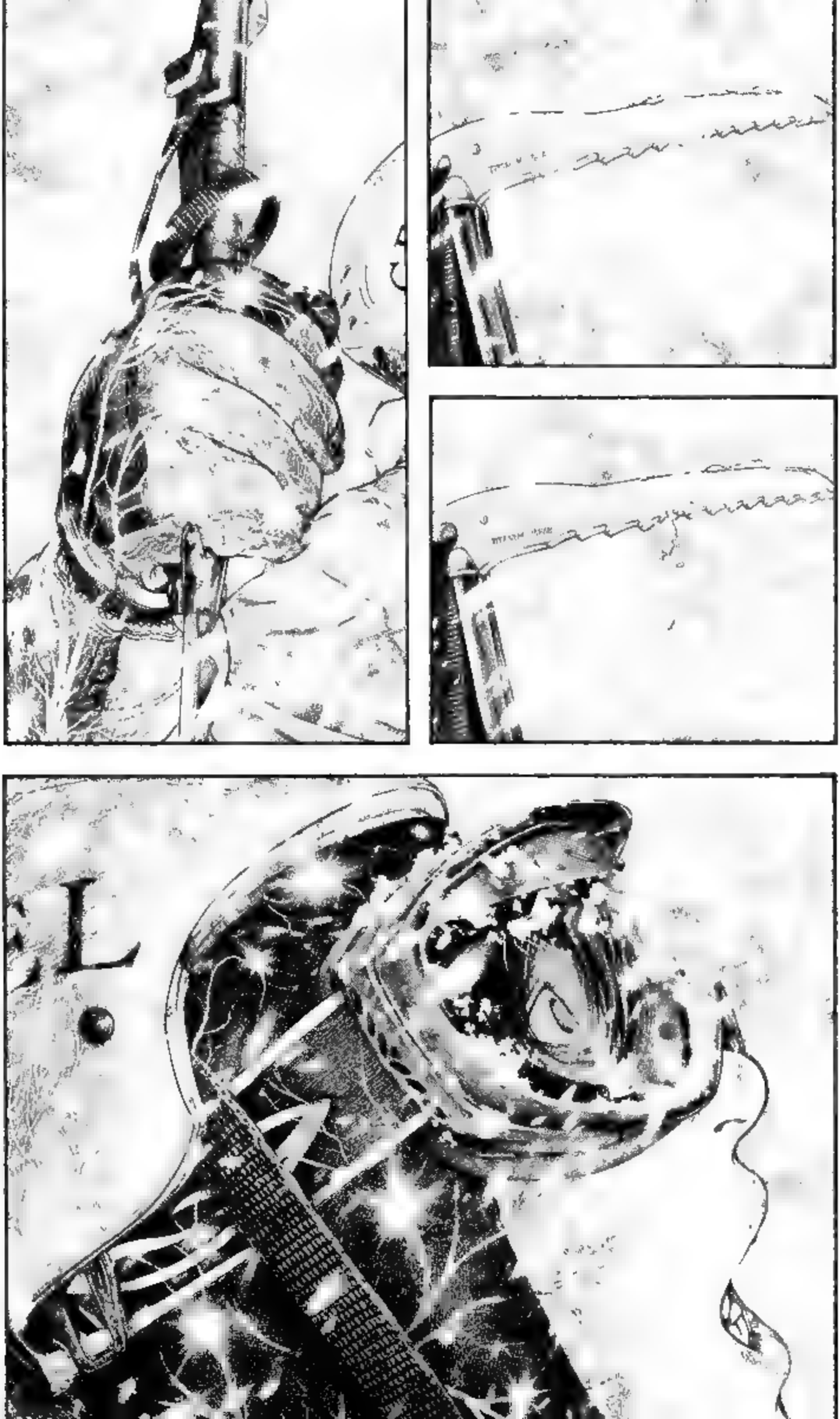
Chapter 169 - CLIMB- Grace



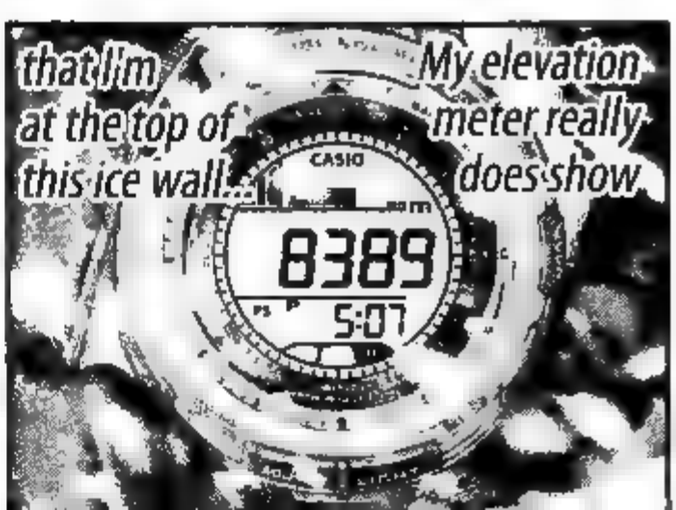
Chapter 169 - *CLIMB*- Grace

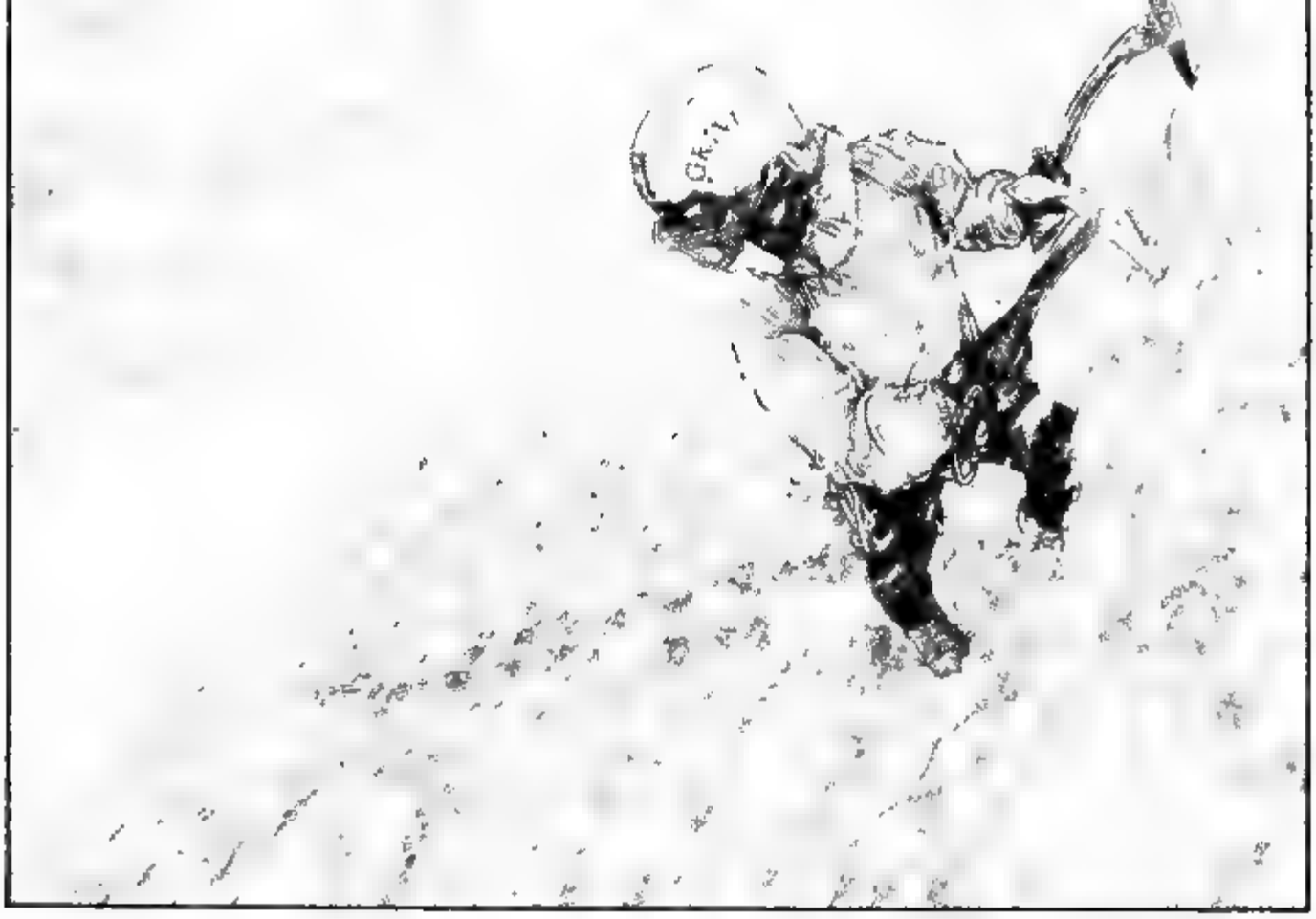
GRIVEL

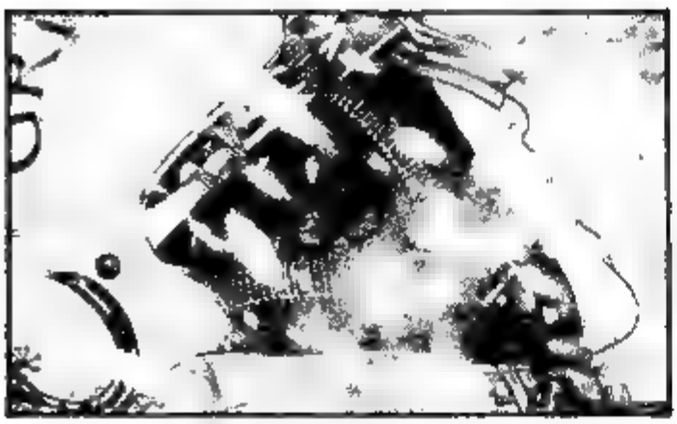


That's the top of the head wall...?!

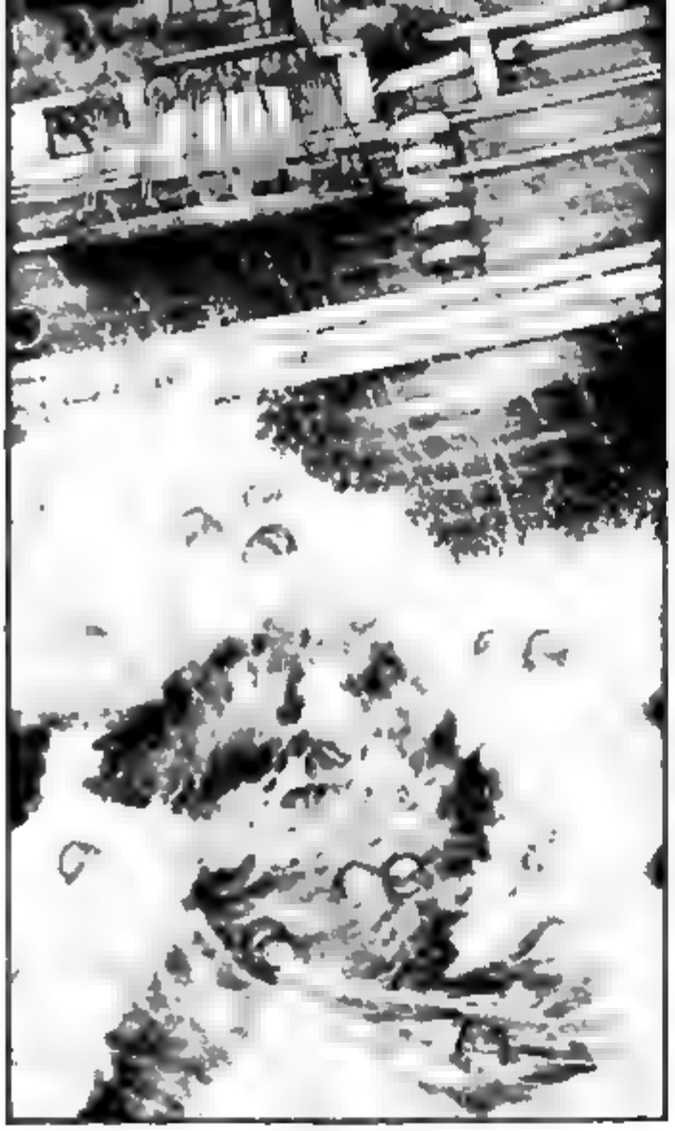
How did I get to a place like this...?

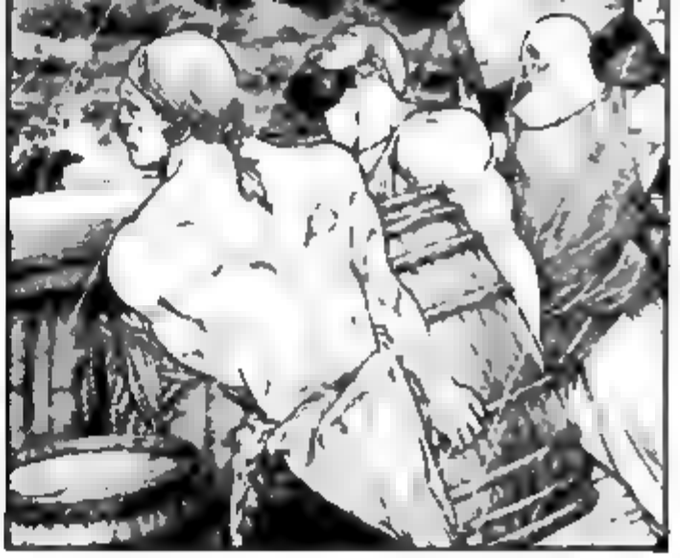


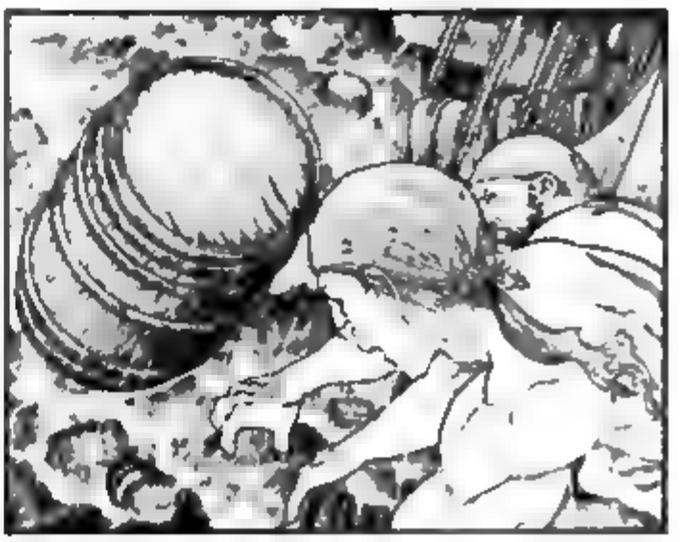


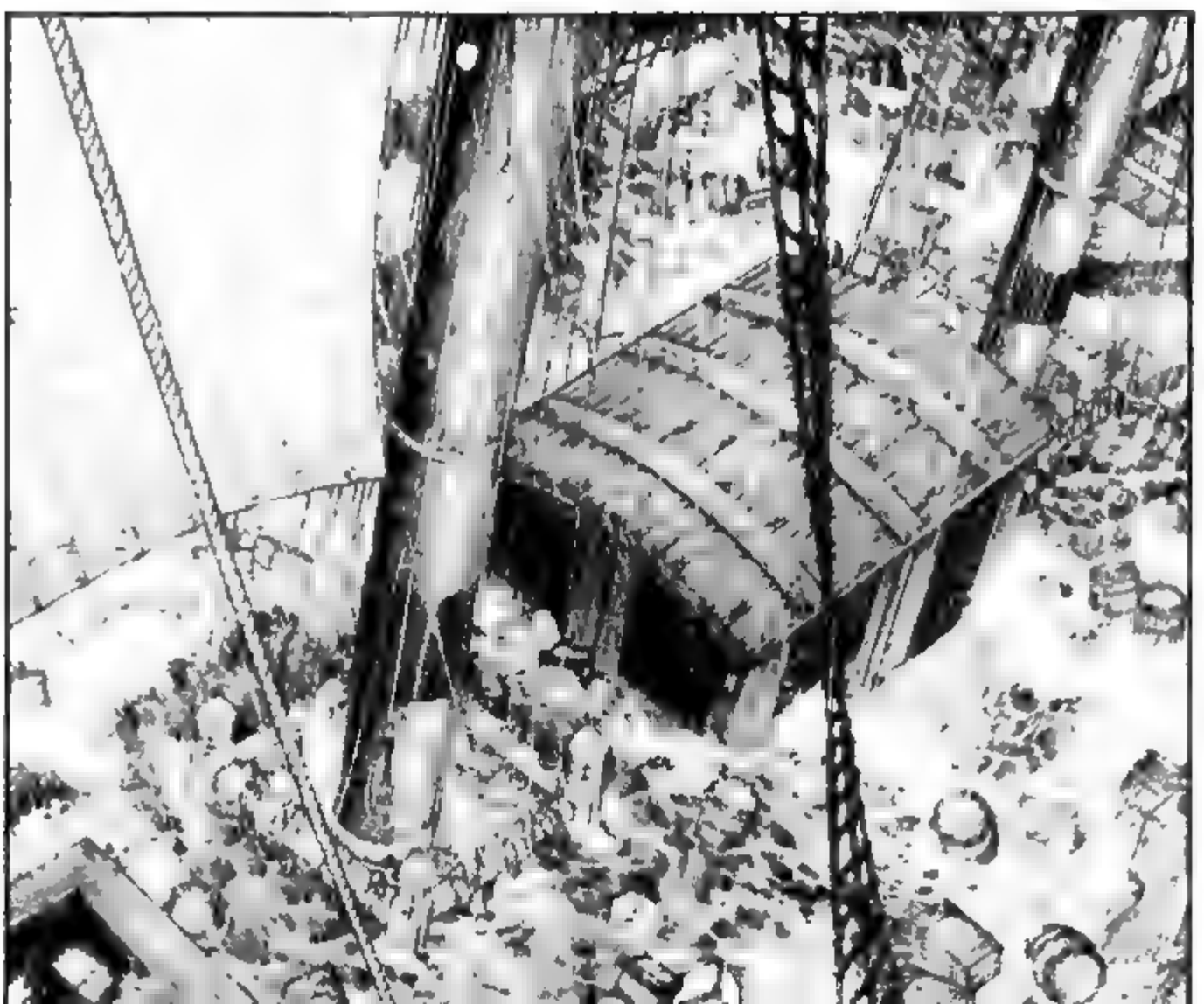


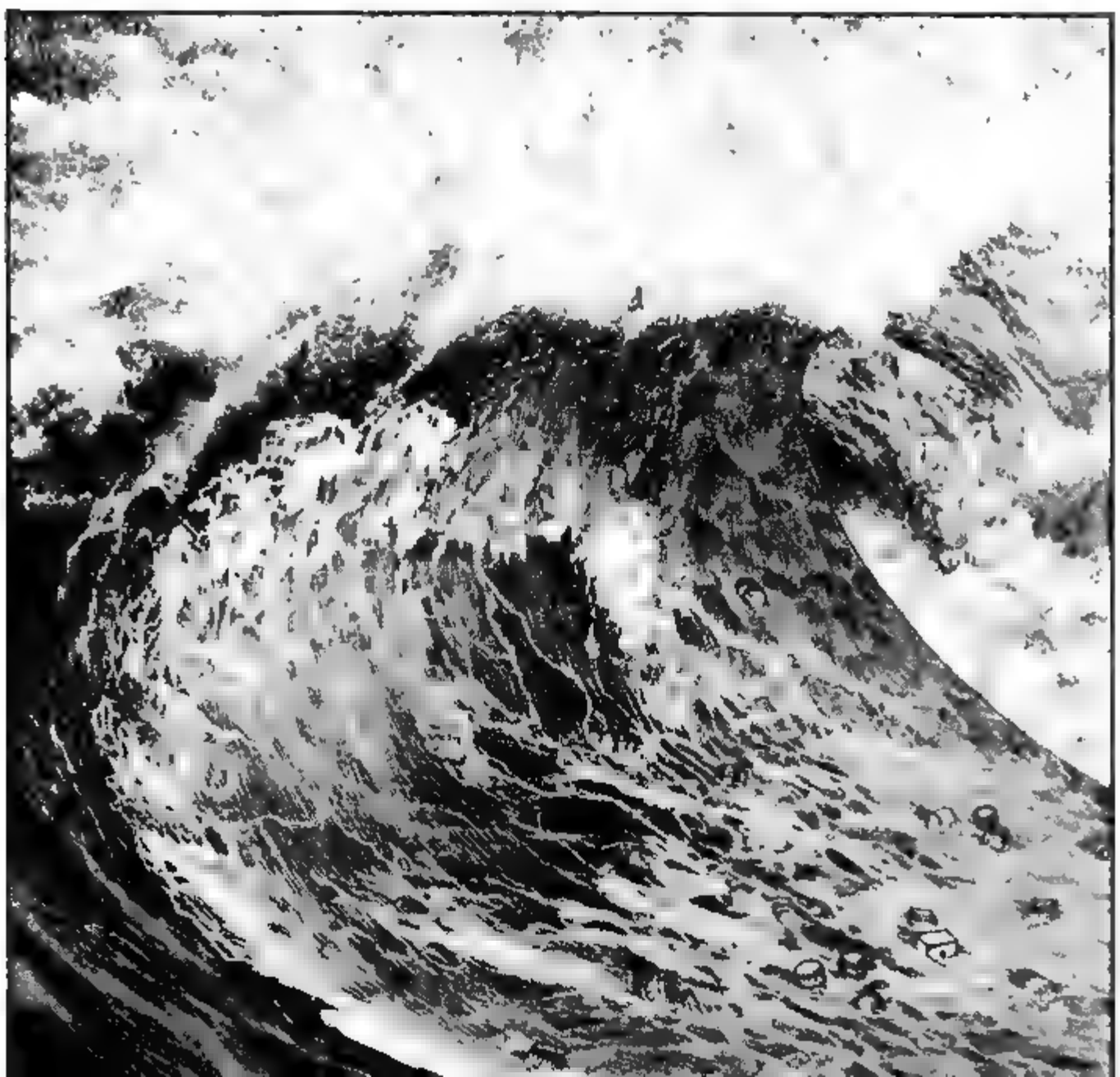
Am I being pulled up by K2...?

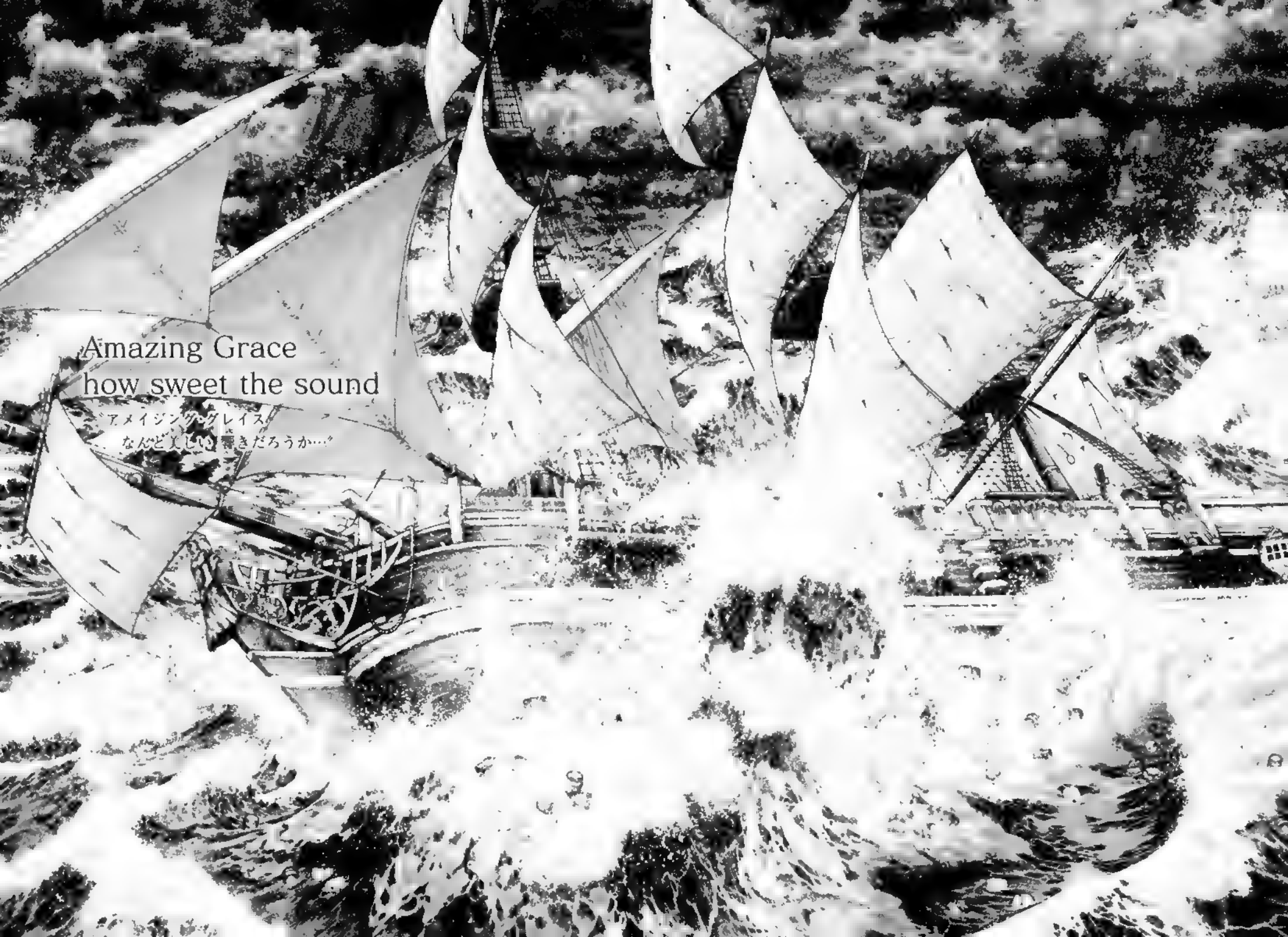




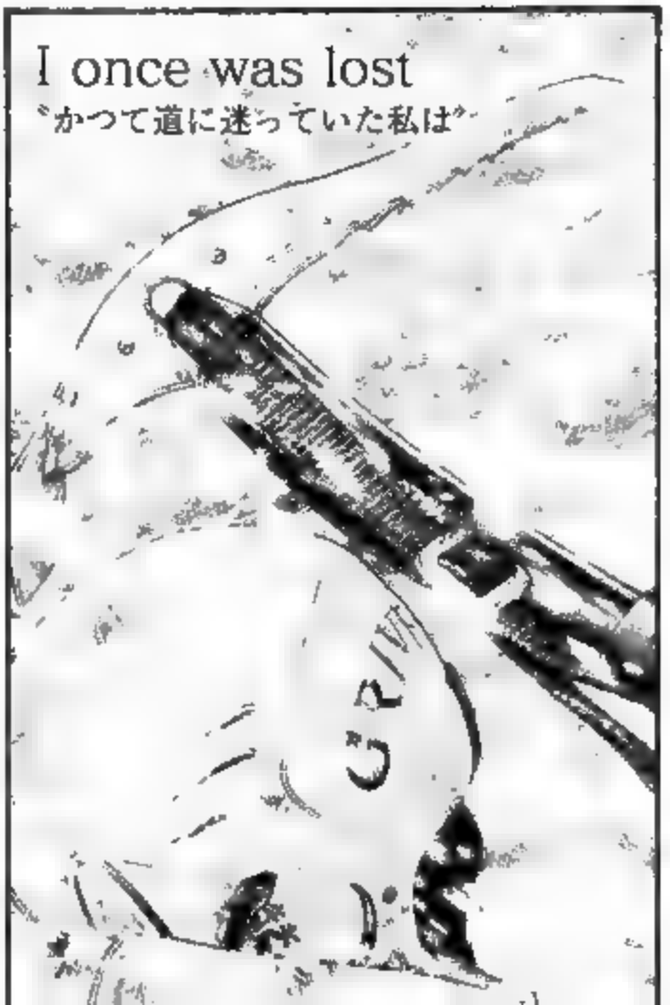







Amazing Grace
how sweet the sound
「アメイジング・グレイス
なんと美しい響きだろうか…」

That saved a wretch like me
〝こんな嫌われ者の私でも 神は救ってくださった〟


I once was lost
〝かつて道に迷っていた私は〟

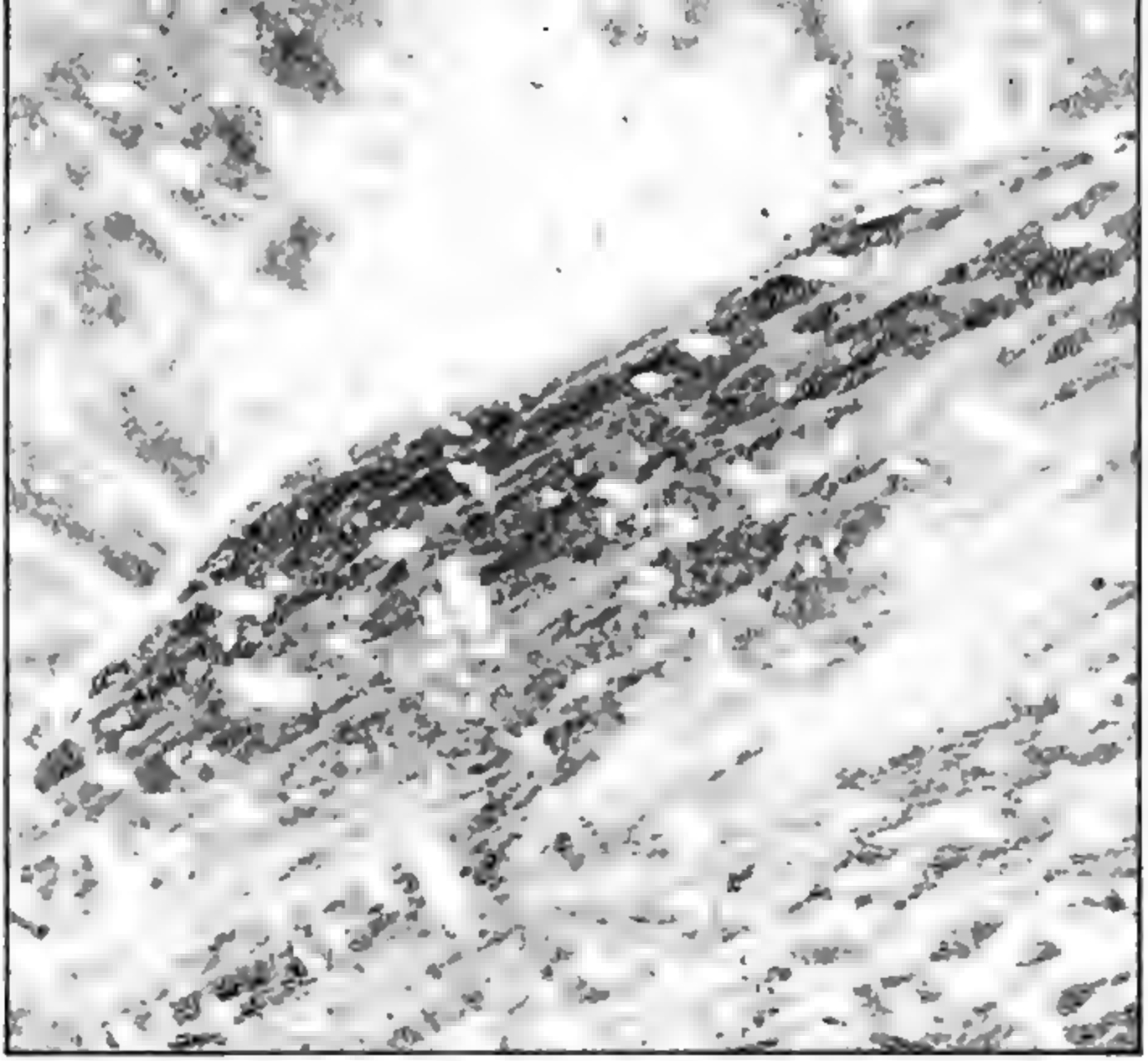
but now
I'm found
〝今 救いあげられた〟

but now I see
今は見える

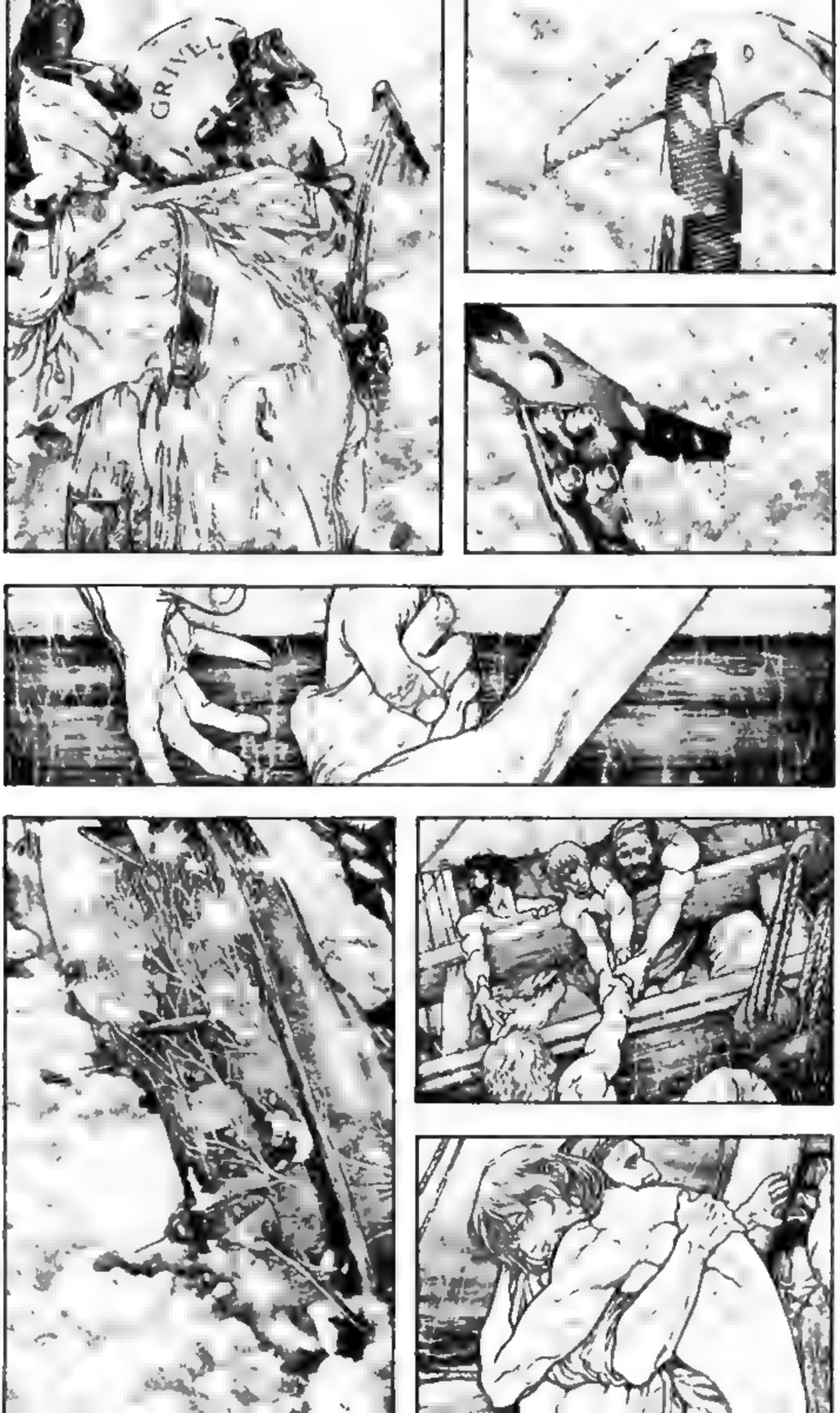
Was blind
何も見えなかった私は

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear
And grace my fears relieved
私の心に恐れを悟したのも神の恵み そして恐れから解き放ったのも神の恵み

How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed
信じることを始めたその時に
なんと尊くも神の恵みは現れたのだ



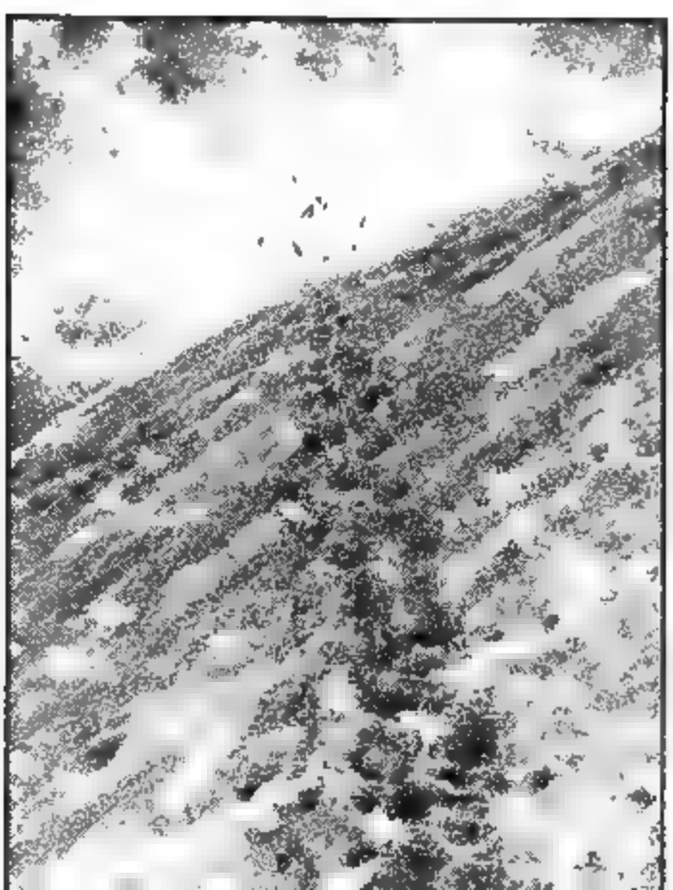
Through many dangers
toils and snares
I have already come

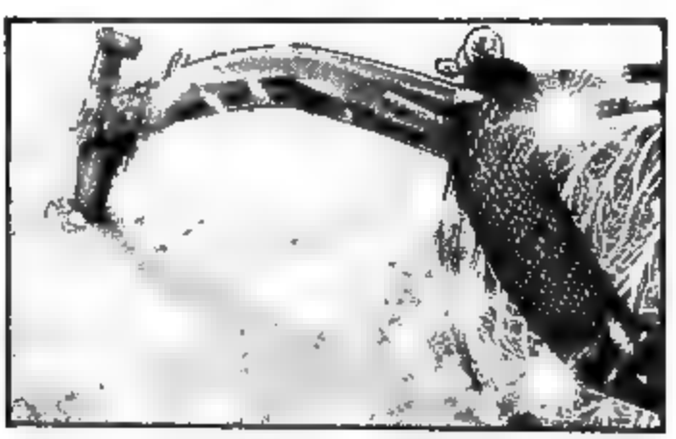

GRIVEL

but
I don't
care any=
more.

be able
to use my
hands or
feet
I probably
won't

I want to die having risen just one step higher.
As long as I'm alive



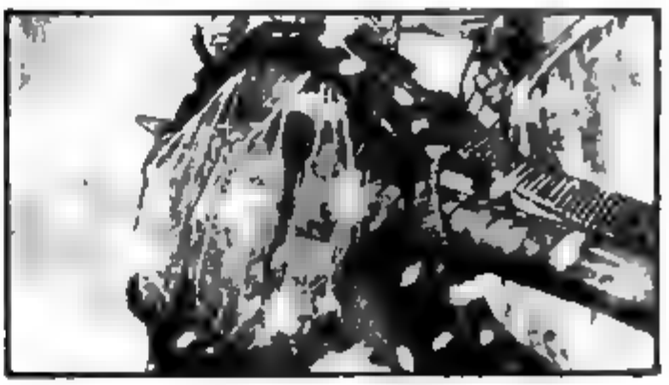


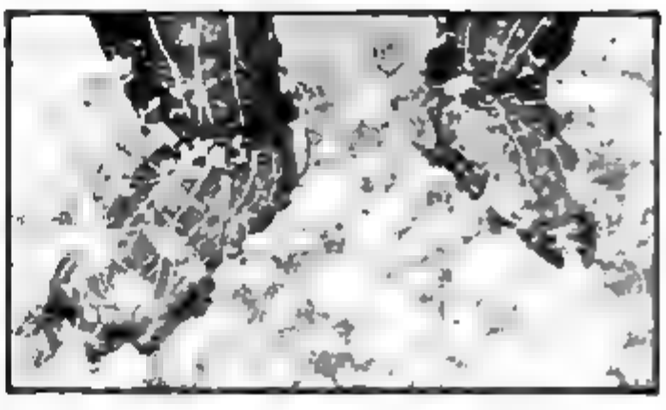
'Tis grace hath brought
me safe thus far
"私をここまで導き給うたのは神の恩恵"

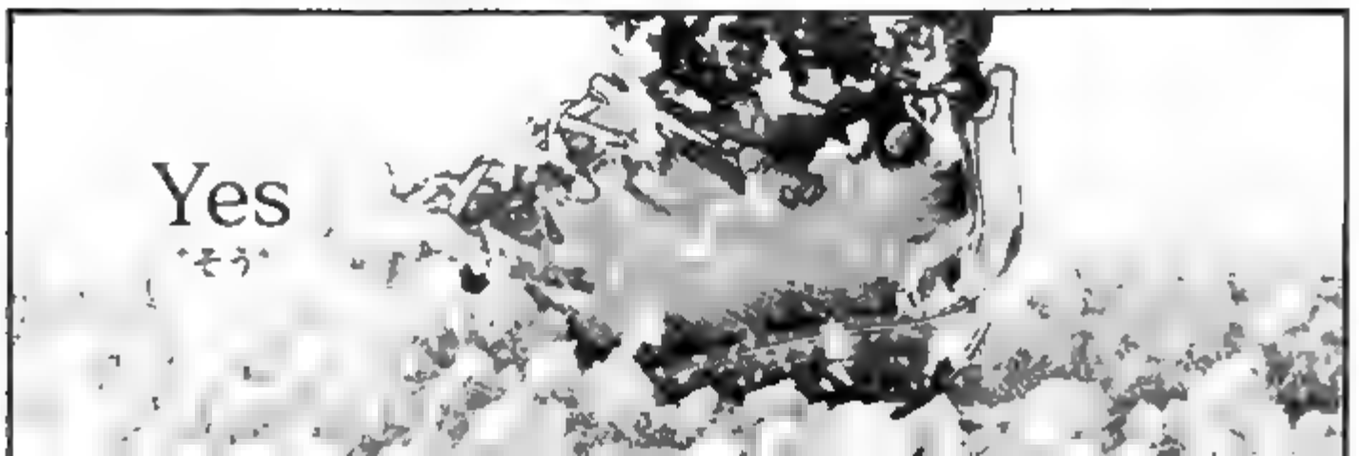
And

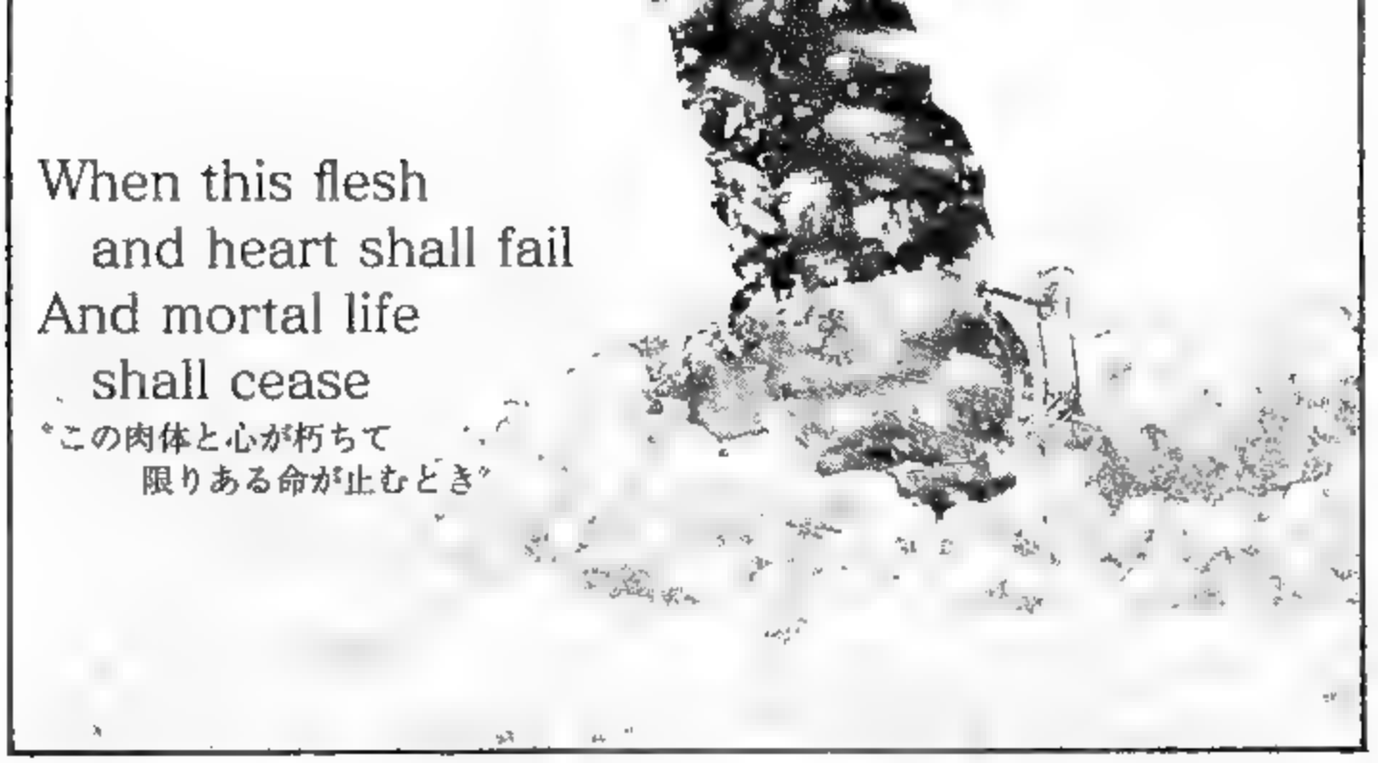
grace will lead me home

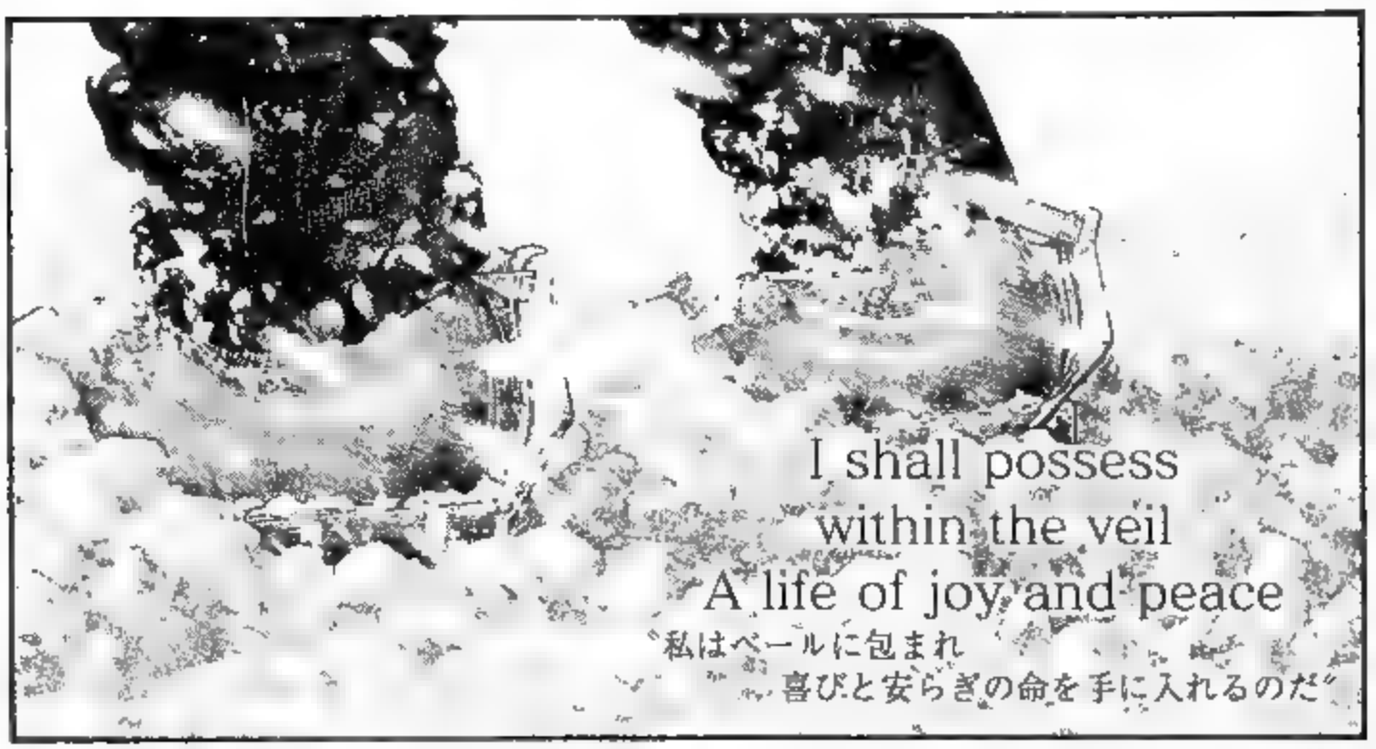
〝その恩恵こそが私を天国に導いてくれるだろう〟

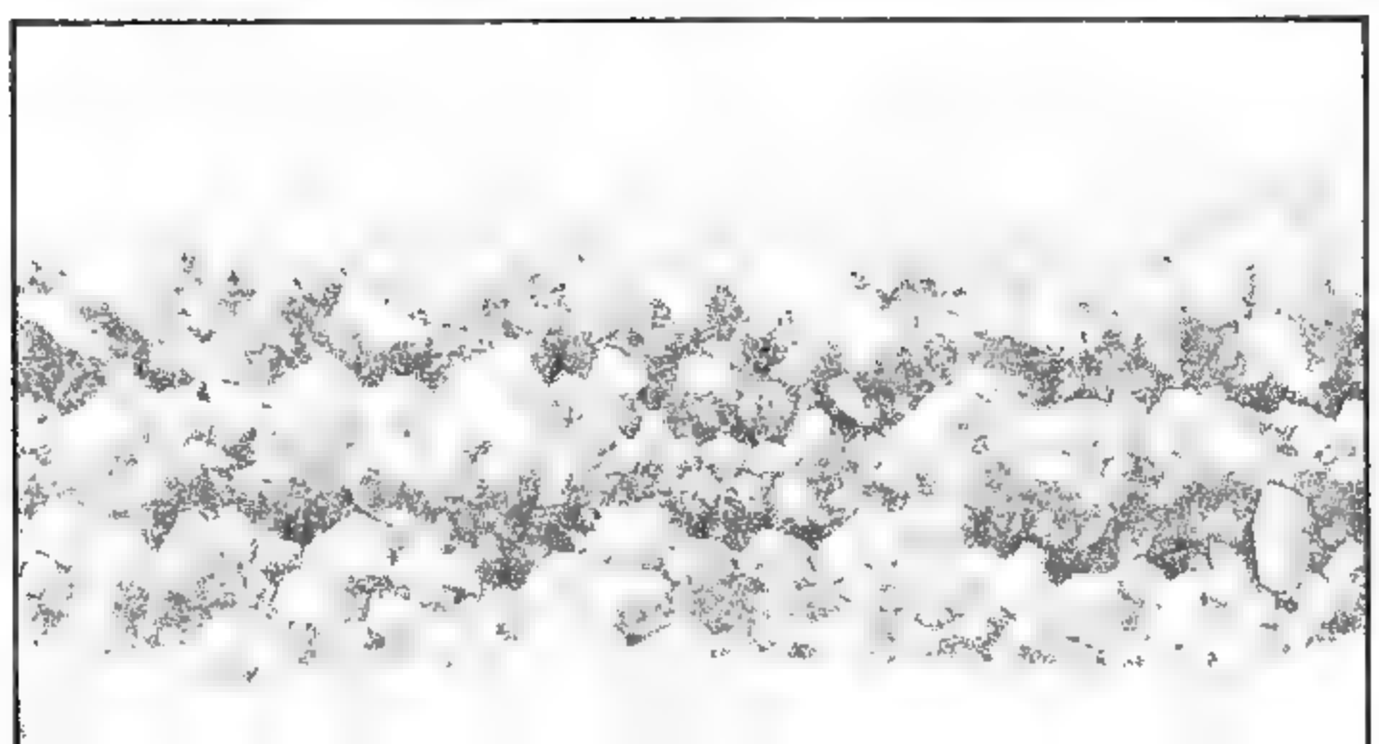





Yes
"そう"


When this flesh
and heart shall fail
And mortal life
shall cease
"この肉体と心が朽ちて
限りある命が止むとき"


I shall possess
within the veil
A life of joy and peace
"私はベールに包まれ
喜びと安らぎの命を手に入れるのだ"



The earth shall soon
dissolve like snow
The sun forbear to shine
But God who called
me here below
Will be forever mine
〝やがて大地が雪のように解け
太陽が輝くのを失っても
私を召された神は
永遠に私とともにあるだろう…〞

KOKOU NO HITO

by Authors: NABEDA Yoshiro and NITTA Jiro
by Artist: SAKAMOTO Shinichi

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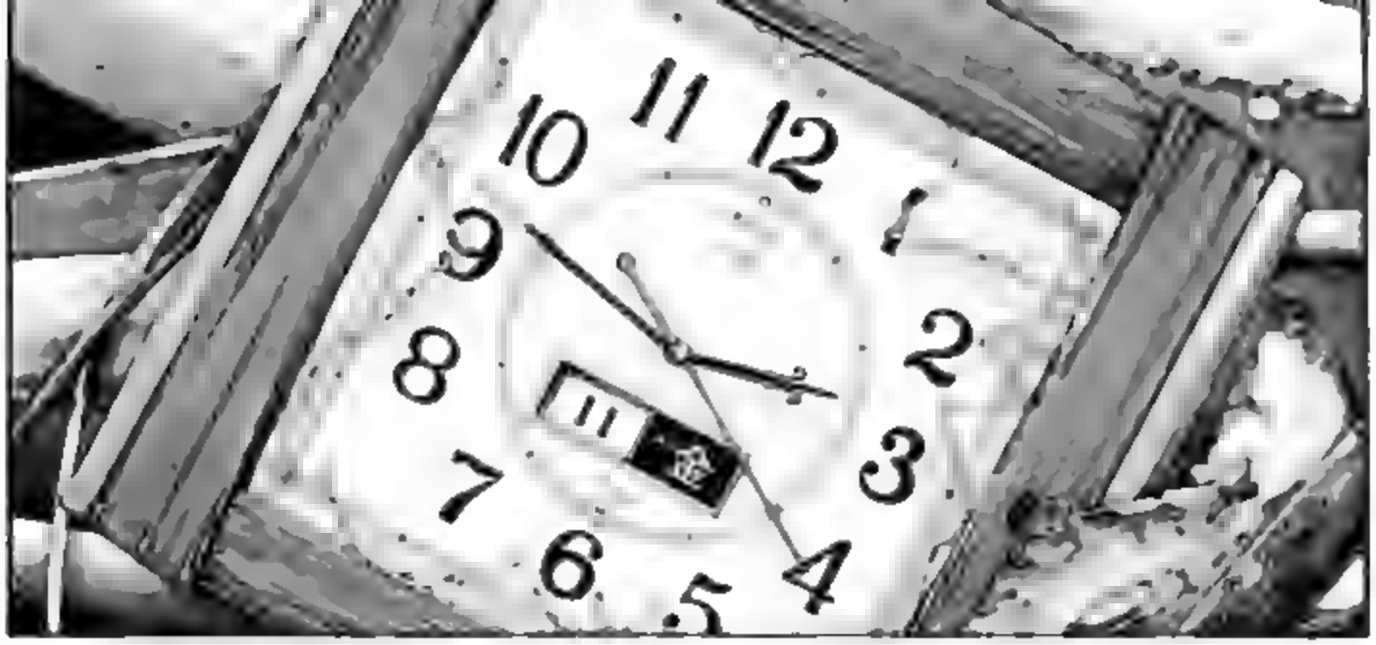
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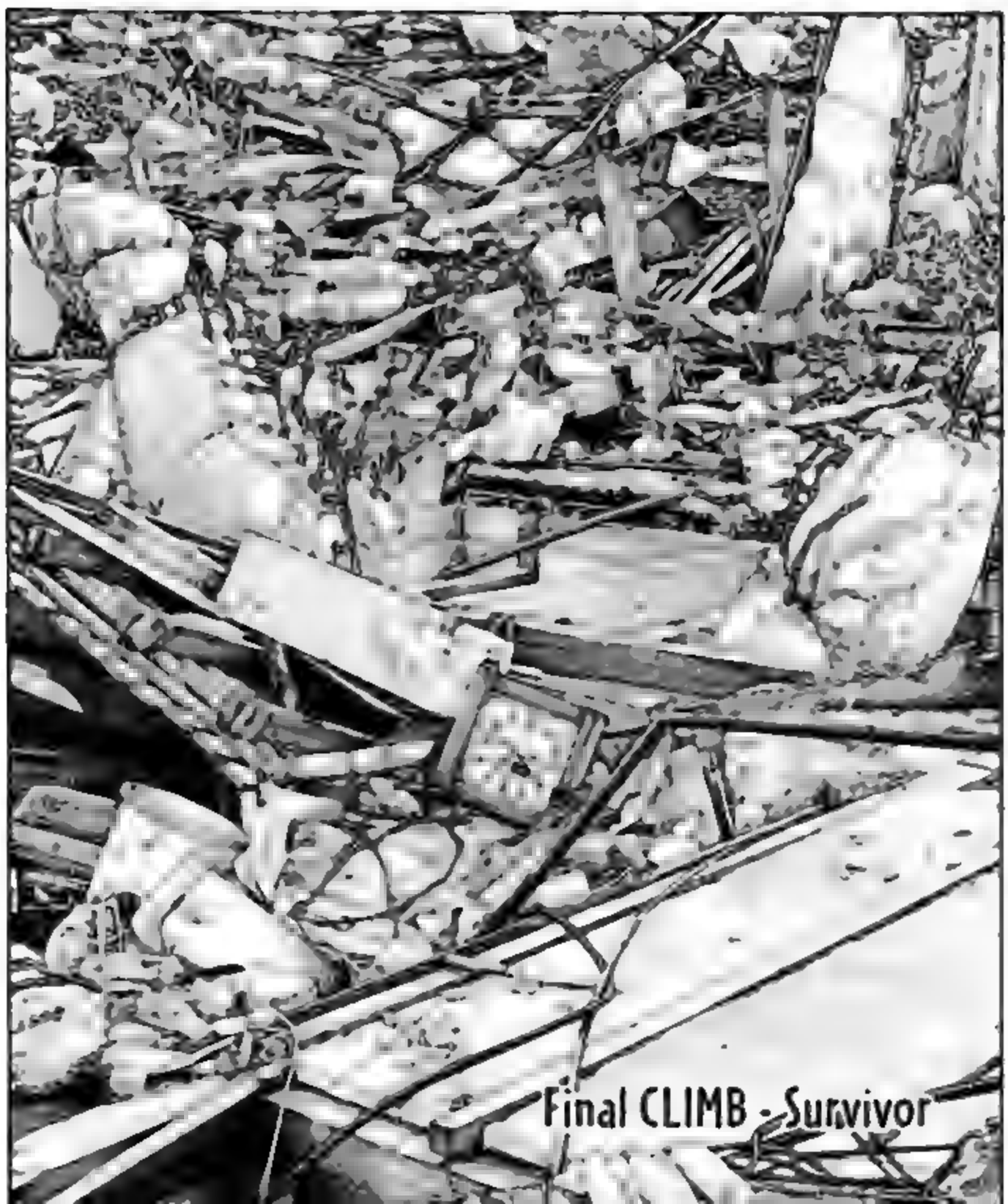
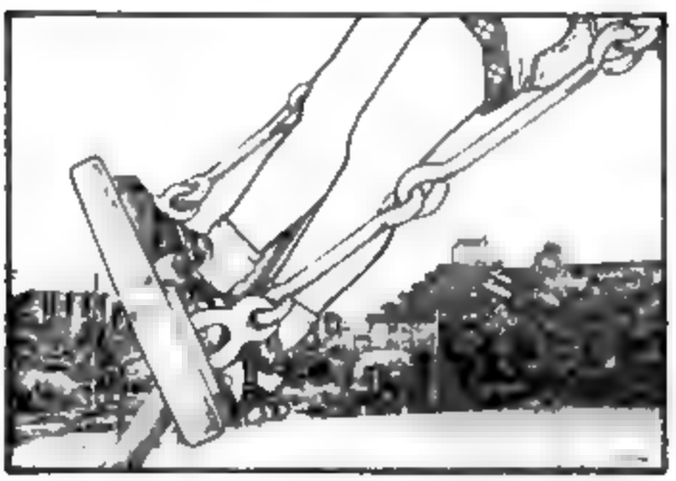
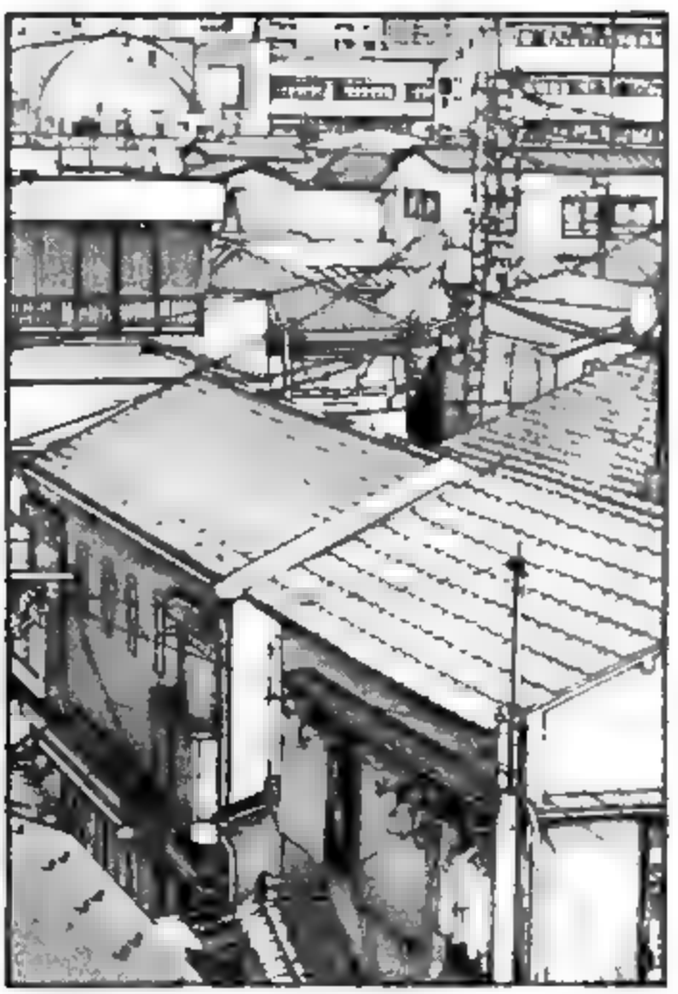
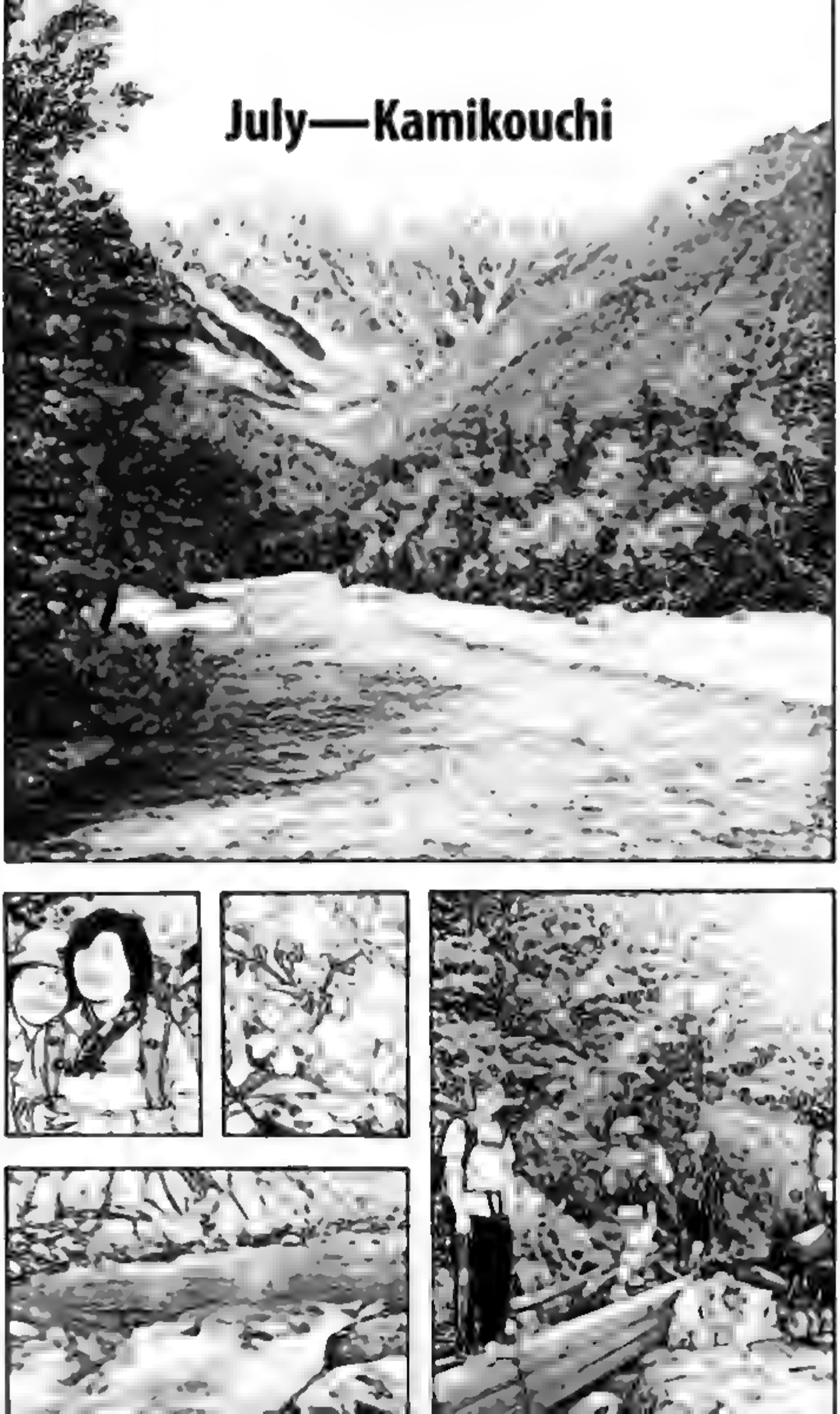

Final CLIMB - Survivor

Final Climb -Survivor






July—Kamikouchi

THAT'S YARI.
I CAN FINALLY SEE IT...

0.6
WE FINALLY GOT TO THE BYOUBU COL

Heiv

A-ARE YOU OKAY?
YOU'RE NOT HURT, ARE YOU?

YOH-
I'LL HELP YOU UP.
IS THAT OKAY?
S... SORRY.

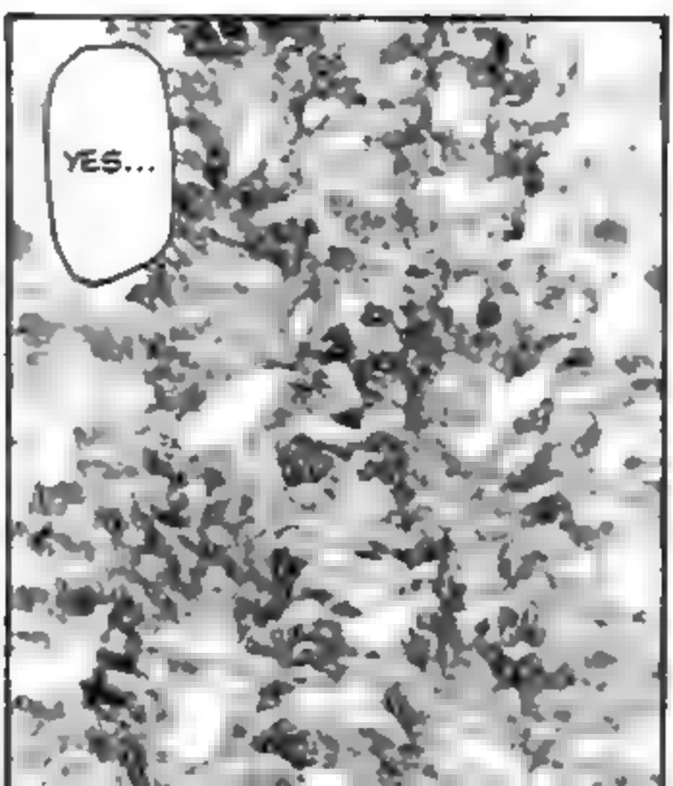
AH, IT WAS NO-TH.NG.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
ALL RIGHT THEN...

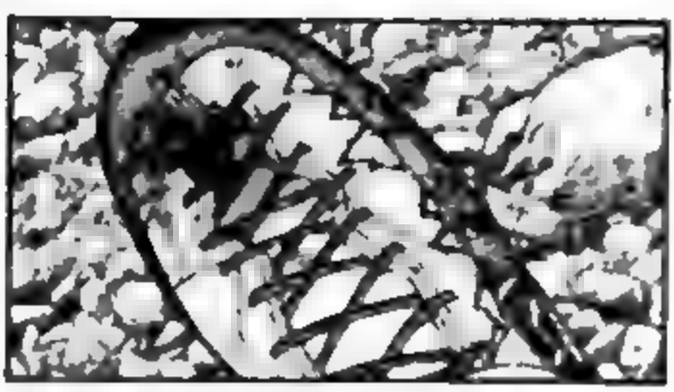
There are some rocky cliffs past here. Is he gonna be okay...?
Are that man's legs bad, too...?

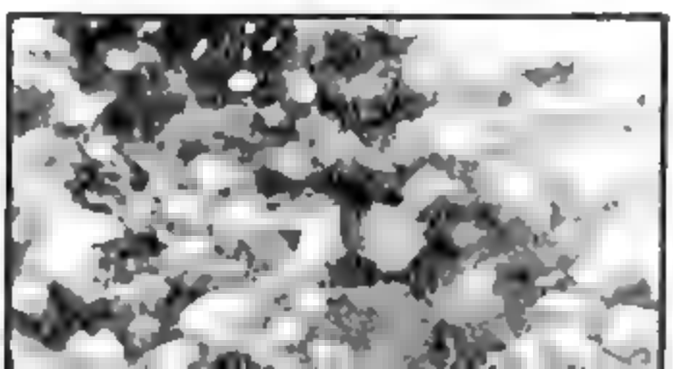
HUH?
THAT'S THE UNMATCHED CLIMBER KATOU BUNTAROU.

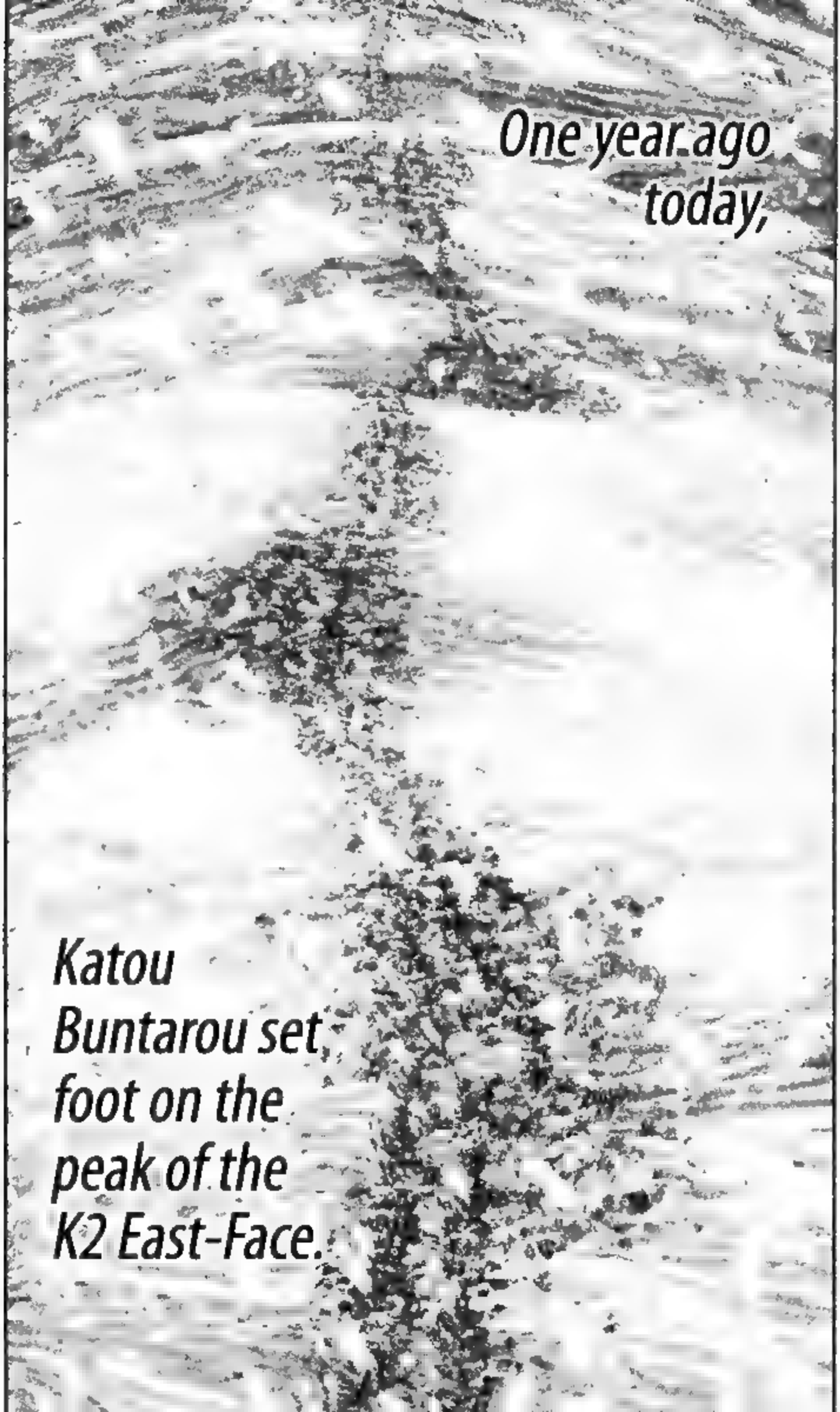
AND THEN FINALLY HE REACHED THE MOUNTAIN AMONG MOUNTAINS, THE ICE WALL UNREACHED BY MANKIND.
HE CHALLENGED THE K2 EAST-FACE. A GREAT SOLO CLIMBER—...
PATA-GONIA, MANA-SULU,
NANGA PARBAT.
HE TOOK ON MANY 8000 METER PEAKS.
BUNTA-ROU...
KATOU ...

....Is him...?


YES...






One year ago today,
Katou Buntarou set foot on the peak of the K2 East-Face.

I can die at the highest place...
Now...

Good.

And due to hemmorages in the fundus of the eye, his field of vision was abnormal.
When he reached the peak, he was suffering from heavy altitude impairment.

The scenery he saw even in his dreams for a span of 10 years
was invaded by numerous black splotches.

Ah...

*MIRRORED TEXT AH

You were Rokka...?

You from back then...

*MIRRORED TEXT ROKKA

*MIRRORED TEXT YOU

The snow...

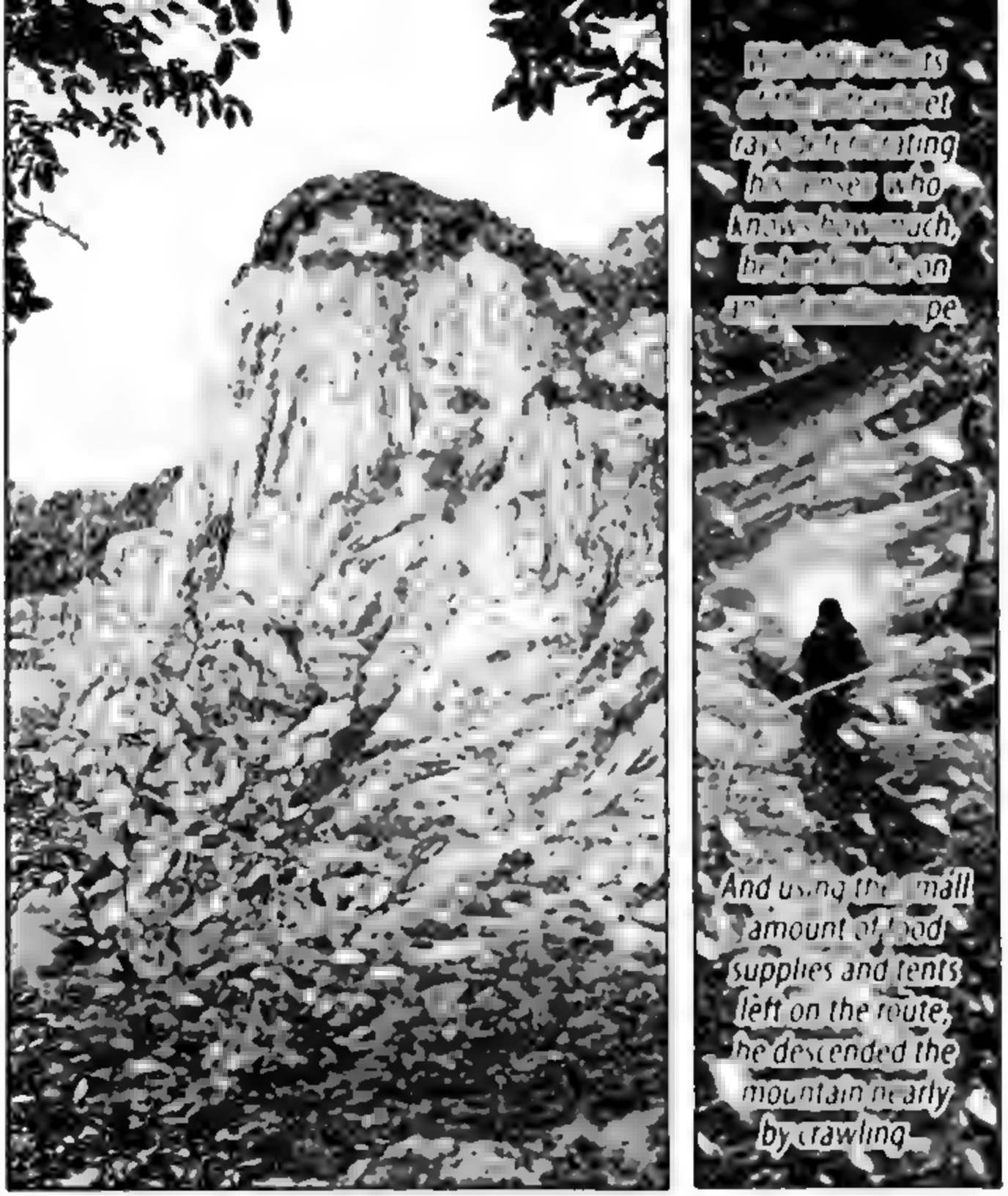
crystals are...

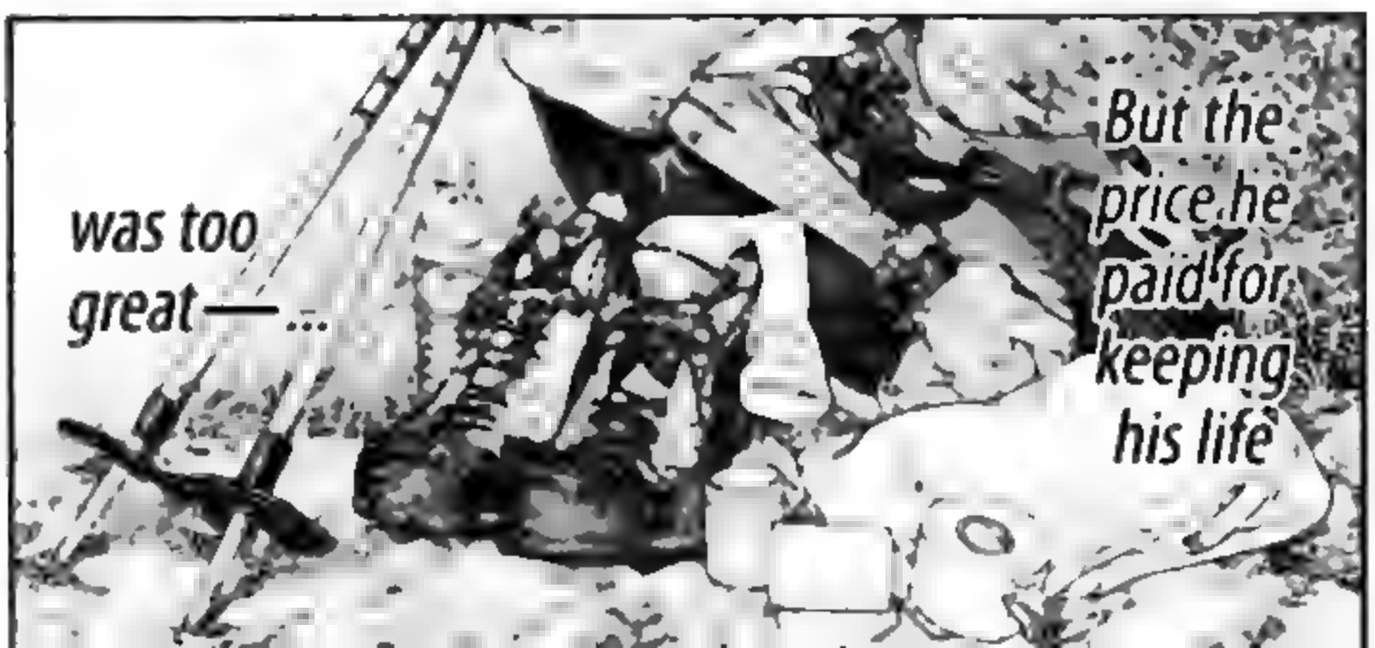
*MIRRORED TEXT SNOW ARE [illegible]

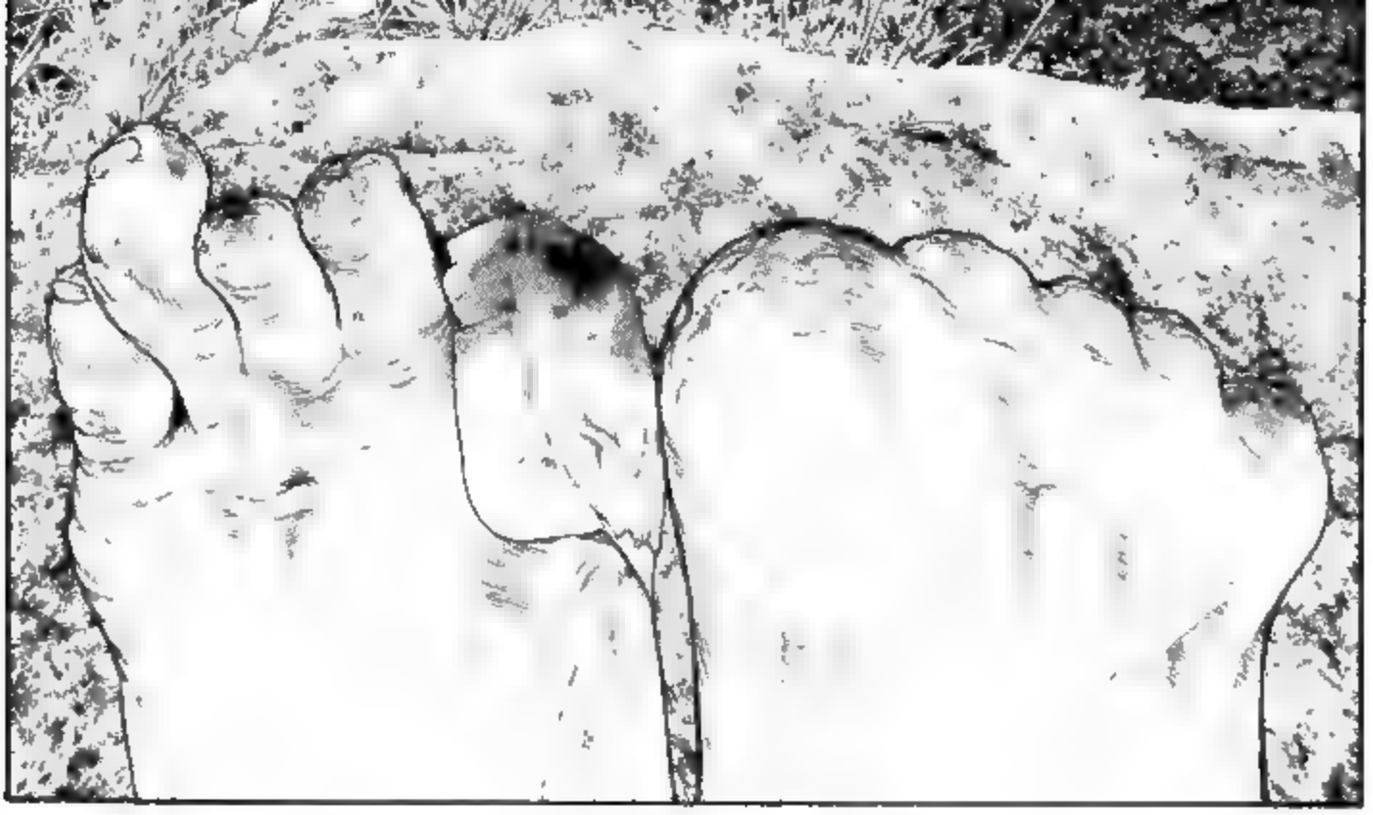
going South...

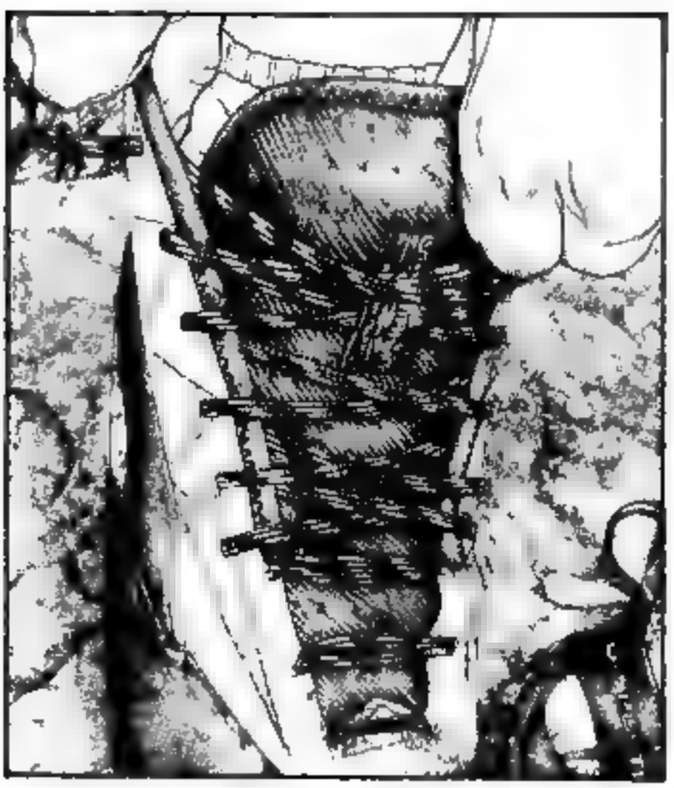
Southeast ——→...

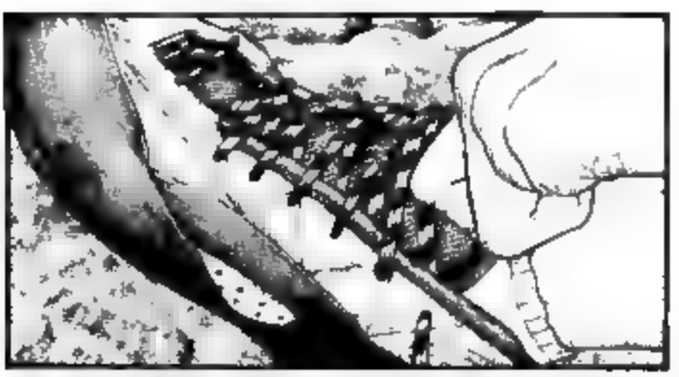
the team that withdrew had left behind a fixed rope.
On the normal route on the Southeast ridge,

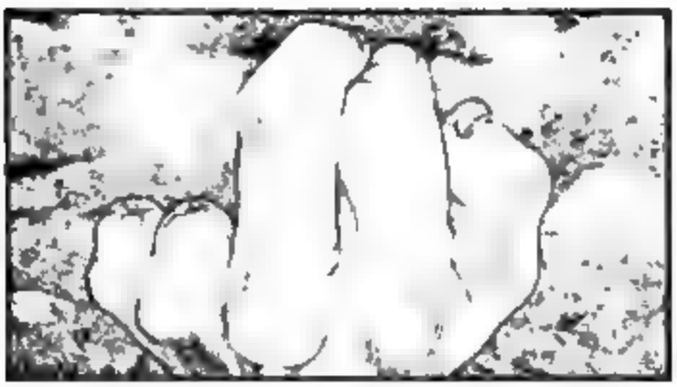

And using the small amount of food supplies and tents left on the route, he descended the mountain nearly by crawling


was too great—...
...But the price he paid for keeping his life





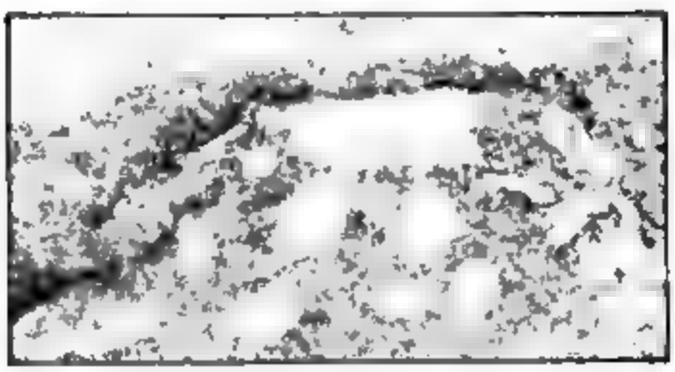




THE
IMMORTAL
KATOU
BUNTAROU
DIED.

——...The climber that loved only mountains

and bet his entire youth on mountains no longer exists in this world...



Sakamoto: From there, the path split in two----.

The beginning of chapter 1 of the novel "Kokou no Hito".
For four years, I was tormented by those words. And while painful,
in the end game made a decision. Above all else, since the beginning of
serialization, I was lost as to where to point Katou Buntarou's
needle of fate at the end of the story.

Before a great work supported by so many people,
I may have lost my nerve. The novel Buntarou, just like the
historical one, passed away at the young age of 31 in the dead of
winter on Mount Yari. That last scene was incredibly sad, as well as a moment
that nobly sublimated the hopeless word "isolation". Would being caught
in a moment of emotion and changing that ending mean
contaminating the spirit of the original work?

But the Katou Buntarou in the manga "Kokou no Hito"
is a man living in the present era. Although it's a created work,
I kept the sense of existence and reality as important elements.
Actually, the personal life experiences and ways of thinking got sucked
into the manga, and I was visited by a mysterious sensation like
I was synchronizing with Buntarou many times.

Buntarou is alive.

Sakamoto: He bears the same pain we do.

So then Buntarou could not have lived without seeing that day.
3-11...

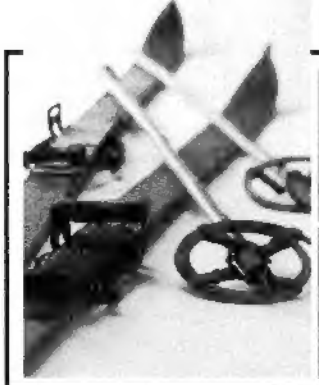
Does he not also share responsibility of the Japan
that took on the distress since that day?

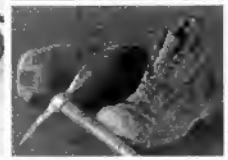
My path was chosen.

From here, the paths will probably continue to diverge.
And when those times come, I will probably reach
a standstill, anguish, and make a decision.
And Buntarou, as well, will continue to walk somewhere.

No matter what pain he'll feel, he won't be able to put down his rucksack.
And he'll believe that beyond there, a flower will bloom----

Heisei Year 23 (2011) October 15th
Sakamoto Shinichi





[UNPARALLELED SOLO CLIMBER] 加藤文太郎

KATO BUNTAROU

In 1925, while still active, he set foot on the Japanese Alps in the dead of winter alone, leaving undying footprints on the world of mountain climbing. The man, Kaou Buntarou. With his love of isolation and his way of life where he found himself on mountains, he is revered by many. Later, the novelist Nitta Jirou sublimated that life as literature with the novel "Kokou no Hito". And that spirit gave birth to the manga "Kokou no Hito". That spirit still lives on even now. By following the life of that unparalleled solo climber, I'll punctuate the series.

▲加藤文太郎が生まれ育った兵庫県浜坂にある加藤文太郎記念図書館には縁の品が所蔵される。

かとうぶんたろう。1905年3月11日、兵庫県浜坂町に生まれる。1919年4月、浜坂尋常小学校高等科から三菱内燃神戸製作所に入社。会社勤めをしながら、1923年ごろから山歩きを始め、トレーニングを重ねつつ本格的な登山活動に入る。北アルプスや中国山地を舞台に多くの雪山単独登山を実践し、不死身の単独行者と呼ばれる。1936年1月、槍ヶ岳北鎌尾根で遭難死。

厳冬の槍ヶ岳北鎌尾根の登攀は、不世出の単独行者といわれた加藤文太郎をして、憧れ、目標とする対象であった。加藤文太郎、その地の松濤明、二人の著名なアルピニストの厳冬の北鎌尾根遭難が北鎌を伝説のルートにした。

厳しい厳冬の山の単独行。他の追随を許さない実績の一方で、謙虚で飾らない人柄から、文太郎は多くの人から愛された。なお、晩年のエピソードには、マタイの登山者となる青年を弟子入・文太郎に託し、自己を省みやり遂げる男が描かれていた(編集部)

THE CLIMBER 18 極限の挑戦者

構成・文○奥川修太郎　イラスト○坂本眞一
写真協力○小池澤(変六小屋)、加藤文太郎記念図書館

"THERE IS VALUE IN FIGHTING WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH"

The most amazing are the distances and long hours of movement he could do in a single day. But he would say things like "When the snow stops falling, the temperature goes down and the blue sky peeks out from the thin cirrostratus clouds, it's a good time to start climbing. If you can't see the sky it'll get stormy again." and "Even on days with good weather where a lot of wind hits the West shoulder of Yari, the temperature won't rise, and it won't melt just like the East slope.", showing his sharp eye for weather and mountains. In the earlier age of mountain climbing they had poor equipment, and had meager food supplies they could use and data on predicting the weather. Means of communication like wireless radios and cell phones did not exist either. Among nature on a severe snowy mountain, he had that discerning eye and spirituality to take on the challenge alone. In the 1930's, an age when there generally wasn't anyone who did any winter climbs of tall mountains, they didn't carry luggage up in advance, and to do these record-setting climbs alone was surprising to say the least.

In 4 years and a few months years starting in 1930, he challenged many snowy mountains solo, did long solo climbs on winter mountains, and learned about doing long-range journeys, but Buntarou also started to hike, ski, and climb with friends. Also, he would go rock climbing with his fellow climbers, and would talk about how important it was to learn techniques for adapting with snow and ice. And how he likely thought about for the next dream he held close to his heart, taking on the challenge of the Himalayas, he would need skills for dealing with ice and snow and the effectiveness forming a party would have towards that dream.

Though he did winter mountain solo climbs, actually most people couldn't keep up with Buntarou's stamina and would shrink back from invitations to extremely long courses of winter mountains. More so than seeking solo records, there were reasons that they ended up as solo challenges.

Seeking challenges from snowy mountains and aiming for climbing icy rock ridges, Buntarou sought out the incredibly skilled Yoshida Tomihisa as a partner. The two of them successfully climbed from the Mount Maehotaka North Ridge to the peak of Mount Okuhotaka in April of 1934. At that time among the bad weather, Yoshida, whom had taken the lead, said "It's because both of us worked so hard during the bad times." and suffered frostbite. But Buntarou said "That's right. It's because we have that spirit that we're able to successfully climb mountains.

"There is value in fighting with all your strength. And being able to stand atop a mountain is just a byproduct of that." Katou Buntarou was a pioneer who climbed and descended many of the Northern Alps 3000 meter peaks in winder, "solo". He didn't simply stand on their peaks, he achieved long traversals and one-day long attacks in the harshness of winter that even in the current age has not been replicated.

He was called the Unparalleled Solo Climber (Alleing狼ger, or Maverick), as well as the isolated (aloof) man. He was thought of as eccentric, and a crank, but he was not so. In the memorial work published after his death, "Solo Climber" (Alleing狼ger/Maverick) contains mountain climbing diaries by Buntarou himself, his thoughts on mountains, about how because climbed mountains while holding a job he got worried when he descended the mountains late, all composed honesty. As well as his coworkers and fellow mountain climbers at his job and his wife Hanako whom he widowed in a little over a year describing what strong intentions he had and what a challenger he was. Giving a genuine view of his personality, how he would go his own path, the way he led his life aloof from the world, his careful integrity to those around him, and how loving and affectionate he was. Recorded overwhelmingly is another serious challenge, pushing to work hard at his occupation. He got married and started a family. When he would take long vacations and get down from the mountains late sometimes, but he was always a good company employee. And he had his eye on the dream of taking on the magnificent Himalayas. He was the type who had intent, effort, and foresight. Katou Buntarou surpassed his generation, and is beloved by modern day climbers.

Katou Buntarou Chronology of Challenges

1926 July Northern Alps - Hyouginza~Mount Yari~Mount Maehotaka~Otake~Mount Kisokoma (11 Days - Solo)
1929 January From a Traversal of Yatsugatake Mountain Range Peaks to Mount Norikura (7 Days - Solo)
1931 January Northern Alps - Mount Ueno~Mount Yakushi~Mount Mitsutarirenge~Mount Eboshi~Oomachi (10 Days - Solo)
1931 February Northern Alps - Mount Kashiumayari, Mount Tusurgi, done in one day each (Solo)
1932 February Northern Alps Consecutive Climbing - Mount Yari~Mount Nukedo~Mount Kasa~, Sarukura~Mount Shirouma (10 Days - Solo)
1933 January Summit of Mount Fuji, starting from the Gotemba Entrance (Solo)
1934 April Northern Alps - Mount Maehotaka North Ridge (Partner Yoshida Tomihisa)
1935 January 16th Married Hanako
November His eldest daughter, Toshiko, is born.
1936 January Northern Alps - From Yarimi Onsen to Mount Yari Shoulder Cabin, together with Yoshida Tomihisa, they aimed to go from the peak down the North arete ridge, but never returned.
1936 April Katou and Yoshida's two corpses were found by Matsumoto High School Mountaineering Club Students in Senjyou Valley.

In January of 1931, entering from the Mount Fuji side he went on a 10-day solo traversal of the central Northern Alps, Mount Ueno~Mount Yakushi~Mount Mitsutarirenge~Mount Eboshi to Oomachi on the Nagano side. In February of the same year, he left Murodou in the dead of winter and rushed up Mount Kashiumayari in 17 hours, creating an amazing record going up and down in one day. In the days when he would typically hire a local guide even for summer mountains for challenging climbs, Buntarou's actions were considered fringe at first; sometimes creating discord with other climbers, but before long the community came to admire him and he became a famous solo climber. These records he made in the dead of winter could not be achieved easily even forming groups 80 years later in the present day.

▲加藤文太郎著『単独行』は版を重ね、現在も出版され続ける。◀勤めを続け、家族を得てなお挑戦を続け、挑戦の舞台の中で最後を迎える。遭難当時、朝日新聞は「単独登攀の加藤、国宝的な存在として認められていた」(※7)と報じたという。単独の加藤文太郎は「孤高の人」となった。

▲北鎌尾根・文高ケルンには、文太郎を山に導いた一人・藤木九三の短歌も。

THE CLIMBER 18 極限の挑戦者

加藤文太郎

KATO BUNTAROU

[不世出の単独行者]

No matter what adversity we stand against, we'll never lose this will." As someone that had strong feelings beyond just great ability, Yoshida was a good partner to Buntarou. In November of 1935, he married Hanako and they had a daughter named Toshiko. The next January he had planned to tackle the long anticipated Mount Yari Northern arete ridge with Yoshida. But the day before they left, "Sitting under a warm kotatsu like this makes going to a mountain seem like an arduous task." Leaving his wife , young daughter, and warm household behind, Buntarou reluctantly headed out to the winter mountain.
At Mount Yari the two met their comrads Ookubo and Hama, and continued together. From the 2nd to 3rd day, they all climbed to the summit, and Ookubo and Hama descended. On the afternoon of the 3rd day, Buntarou and Yoshida went down the North arete and went into an attack to go back up. But it turned into a blizzard, and on the 4th day Ookubo and Hama went back to the Mount Yari shoulder cabin. They waited there for the 5th and 6th days, but the other two didn't come back. On the 7th day, the two of then went down the mountain and filed the first report of an accident. In the search that immediately followed, there was a break in the path made through the snow 10 meters below the peak, and the estimated that the two climbers had fallen into the Senjou valley. Because it was a season with deep snow, the search was halted.
On the morning of January 6th, at her bedside, Hanako had heard the words "Is your body feeling all right? As long as you're feeling well, everything is okay." that Buntarou left her with. And she had said she was awoken by Toshiko's crying voice.

In April, the bodies of the two climbers were found in Senjou valley by the Matsumoto High School Mountaineering Club. They fell from just above the peak, and at a distance of some several kilometers in deep snow, the two tried to help each other and descend. Before long, Yoshida could no longer move. Buntarou stood his ice axe in the snow to use as a landmark. In order to return alive and seek help, he kept moving until the end, and his body flowed a further 200 meters downward before expiring. He kept walking through the snow to try to survive, and those were the last moments of the solo climber Katou Buntarou.
Quotes 1~3 are from "Dandokukou" (Solo Climb)
Quotes 4~7 from "Reminiscense of Katou Buntarou - The Indomidable, fortuitous Mountaineer"

孤高の人

THE LONELY MASTER

17

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孤高の人
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